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THE LIVES  
OF  
THE FATHERS, MARTYRS  
AND OTHER PRINCIPAL  
SAINTS





## SAINT TERESA OF LISIEUX

*Frontispiece Vol. V*

"I have never given the good God aught but love, and it is with love that He will repay. After my death will let fall a shower of roses." Teresa joined the Carmelite order at the early age of fifteen. She lived only a few years but her teaching of "The Little Way" to Jesus has spanned the whole world.

THE LIVES  
OF  
THE FATHERS, MARTYRS  
AND OTHER PRINCIPAL  
SAINTS

BY THE REV. ALBAN BUTLER

EDITED FOR DAILY USE BY

THE REV. BERNARD KELLY, F.R. HIST. SOC.

VOLUME V



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*Nihil obstat*.....**Joannes M.T. Barton, S.T.D.,**  
.....**I.S.S.**  
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## PREFACE

THE *Lives of the Saints* have been from time immemorial a recognized source of sanctity. They form, as is well known, a very considerable part of the Breviary Lessons which the clergy in Major Orders, and also Religious under solemn vows, are bound to recite daily. The study of hagiography, moreover, is recommended as a spiritual exercise of great profit in nearly all works dealing with the subject of asceticism and progress in holiness. History, as Napoleon used often to say, is philosophy teaching by example, and in biography, both sacred and profane, history speaks to us, as it were, not only through the individual, but with all the additional force of concrete example and personal appeal. After sacred Scripture, and what may be described as the normal teaching of the Church, probably nothing has more conduced to the promotion of sanctity throughout the ages than the recorded memorials of the Saints. A large treatise, indeed, might be written showing the far-reaching extent of this most interesting cause of edification and consolation. But not to multiply examples unduly, it may be remarked that the study of the subject in question has, under God, moulded to no small extent the history of the Church herself. Thus, the casual perusal of the *Lives of the Saints* directly determined the vocation of St Ignatius Loyola—a vocation which very largely saved Europe to the Faith! Later, the same medium was to guide in a similar direction St Alphonsus Liguori and St Paul of the Cross, both of whom founded Congregations that not only infused the fire of devotion into the “dullness and deism” of the eighteenth century, but which have since continued to foster and stimulate the piety, and, it may be added, the repentance, of countless millions in the Old World and the New.

Biographies of holy persons formed a favourite branch of the spiritual reading of the Catholics of these realms all during the penal times, and when Dr Umfreville's *Lives of the Saints*, in four quarto volumes, appeared in 1729, the work certainly marked an epoch in the literary history of the recusant body in Great Britain and Ireland.<sup>1</sup> Notwithstanding certain

<sup>1</sup> The Rev. Charles Umfreville (1687-1763) better known on the English Mission as “Mr Charles Fell,” was a doctor of the Sorbonne. His work on the Saints also treats of the Feasts and Fasts, but the absence of much reference to the miraculous caused the book to be rather severely criticized by Dr Robert Witham, President of Douay, and others. The

inherent defects, inevitable, perhaps, owing to the circumstances of the times, the publication must take its place with such post-Reformation literary achievements as Campion's *Ten Reasons*, Dodd's *Church History*, Gother's *Papist Misrepresented and Represented*, Ward's *England's Reformation*, and the several classic treatises of Bishop Challoner—to name but very few of the quite well-known, if older, Catholic apologies. Umfreville's production, though superseded by Butler's masterpiece on the same subject, nevertheless paved the way for the more famous work. Alban Butler's *Lives of the Fathers, Martyrs, and other principal Saints*, issued from the press in 1745—the memorable year of the last Jacobite rising. The author, who later became President of St Omer's, was a born biographer. He had deep learning, great sympathy with human endeavours, and a wide outlook on life. At the time of his somewhat premature death, 15th May, 1773, he was projecting lengthy monographs on Cardinal Fisher and Sir Thomas More—names which, despite the defection of the nation from the Faith of its fathers, have always—especially More's—been held in honour by Englishmen. Butler's recognized erudition and genial disposition brought him into amicable contact with such diverse characters as the learned Dr Robert Lowth, Bishop of London, and the redoubtable William Augustus, Duke of Cumberland of Culloden notoriety. To follow ever so diffidently—and distantly—in the footsteps of so illustrious an authority, is in itself a most difficult, not to say, invidious undertaking! The writer of these *Lives* can only crave the kind indulgence of his readers, especially for the shortcomings which must make his effort the poorer by comparison. The accounts here set forth are of those holy persons Canonized or Beatified since 1773. A very few Venerables are added—chiefly from among the English Martyrs—on account of the particular interest involved, while, of course, many more have had to be omitted owing to want of room. The various biographical sketches are written mainly from the historical point of view, for, again, limitations of space have prevented any but the briefest references to the miraculous occurrences connected with those thus honoured in more recent times by the Church. While such enforced omissions are much to be regretted, it must be remembered—and the recollection is consoling—that the greatest miracle of all in the life of any Saint, is the attainment to heroic sanctity—the supreme victory obtained over such manifold difficulties as the “world,” circumstances, temperament, and above all the mighty assaults of the dread, fallen Arch-angel! Though what have been termed—more rhetorically than correctly—

publication also involved the author in debts amounting to about £1272, but notwithstanding all this, the *Lives* reached a second edition in 1750. The writer was a Canon of the “Old Chapter,” though here again, he was unfortunate, for his election was denounced as “irregular!”

perhaps—the “Ages of Faith,” have passed away, constant instances of the triumphs of sanctity are gloriously apparent amidst the hectic hustle, the delusive glammers and assertive pretensions, that so largely go to make the fitful fever of modern life. At closely recurring intervals, the Church securely placed upon the Rock of Peter, solemnly announces the Canonization or Beatification of some elect soul—one that has not only come successfully through many tribulations to the Kingdom of God, but who teaches, and will teach, great multitudes by the precious legacy of sacred lore, or animating example, the secret of that victory which alone overcomes the world!

In conclusion, the writer wishes to express his great indebtedness to the Rev. Aston Chichester, S.J., Rector of Beaumont, for his kindness in permitting him free access to the valuable library of the College, and also to the Rev. Sister Mary St Sebastian of the Good Shepherd Convent, Ashford, Middlesex, for procuring many sources of information relating to the subject which, otherwise, would not have been easily forthcoming.

BERNARD KELLY.

ENGLEFIELD GREEN,  
SURREY,  
*September, 1928.*

## FOREWORD TO THE FOURTH EDITION

ALL the “Lives” have been carefully reconsidered, and various notes inserted by way of further elucidation. Two additional biographical sketches, those of St John Bosco and Blessed Euphrasia Pelletier, are given in the Appendix. The fact that the book has gone into four editions since its first publication in 1928, may perhaps be regarded as a sign that it has found favour with a considerable section of the reading public.

BERNARD KELLY.

BRIXTON HILL, S.W. 2.  
1936.

## FOREWORD TO THE FIFTH EDITION

THERE is, perhaps, no better proof of the permanent value of Butler's classical "Lives" than the fact that several large reprints of the same have appeared in recent years. Notwithstanding the almost unparalleled upheaval caused by two world wars, the wonderful edification and erudition of the long famous work continue to console and instruct a multitude of interested and grateful readers.

The present Edition of the Supplement to the Book contains among others, notices of two names closely connected with the age in which we live. St Gemma Galgani and St Frances Xavier Cabrini, to whom we refer, have illustrated by their example the dual sanctity of the contemplative and active life respectively, by which heroic holiness is attained and the Kingdom of God extended on earth.

BERNARD KELLY.

BRIXTON HILL, S.W. 2,  
1948.

## FOREWORD TO THE SEVENTH EDITION

IN this the latest edition of Butler's monumental work, several new biographies have been added including that of Pope Pius X, beatified in 1950. If History is Philosophy teaching by examples, an apophthegm of Dionysius of Halicarnassus often quoted by Napoleon, then Hagiography may be called the Science of Sanctification illustrated by the lives of those who practised it in so exalted a degree.

It is from this rich and varied source that so many have derived those flowers of devotion which adorn, and indeed, compose the Garden of the Soul. All the world knows what the Lives of the Saints did in the way of directing the Vocation of St Ignatius Loyola, and in shaping the pastoral zeal of St John Baptist Vianney, the wonderful Curé of Ars, some three centuries later — to cite but two instances of the very many that might be given.

All this is apart from that instruction in Church History, Moral Theology and other kindred matters, which are part and parcel of this branch of sacred learning which abounds so much in holy wisdom, edification and consolation — those three great milestones on the road to a happy eternity.

BERNARD KELLY.

BRIXTON HILL, S.W. 2,  
1954.

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# THE LIVES OF THE SAINTS

AND OF HOLY PERSONS BEATIFIED SINCE 1774, TOGETHER WITH  
BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICES OF CERTAIN OTHERS DECLARED  
VENERABLE SINCE THAT TIME

JANUARY I

TOMASI, THE BLESSED JOSEPH MARIA<sup>1</sup>

(1649-1713)

THIS saintly prelate and eminent liturgical scholar was born at Licata, Sicily, the eldest son of the Duke of Palma. As a boy, the young Marquis was remarkable for two things—a great devotion to Our Blessed Lady, and a close application to study, especially that of the ancient and oriental languages. The missions which had been opened in the East towards the close of the previous and the beginning of the succeeding century had led to a great revival of interest in such matters as Arabic, Syriac, etc., and learned editions of works in these tongues were being issued with Latin translations of the originals printed, as a rule, parallel with the text. At the age of seventeen the young Marquis, already no mean scholar, formally renounced his title and great inheritance, and entered the Theatine Order at Palermo. The Clerks Regular or Theatines had been founded in 1524 by St Cajetan and Cardinal Caraffa to pursue a life of more than Franciscan poverty, “preach the Gospel to every creature,” and last and not the least, to reform by word and example the scandals rife among the relaxed clergy and laity of the Renaissance period. High as the standard was, Tomasi surpassed all the novices in the observance of the rule and every duty, and in his daily life, charity, prayer and mortification appeared ever to strive for the mastery. Meanwhile, he continued with redoubled ardour his study of languages and philology generally, and such a reputation for erudition in this respect did he acquire that his name became illustrious throughout Italy as that of a master of his special subjects. Among those who sought the friendship and instruction of the learned Theatine was the Cardinal Giovanni Francesco Albani, himself a Greek and Latin scholar of the first order. The future Clement XI no doubt already had in view those practical reforms which

<sup>1</sup> The name is sometimes spelt Tommasi.

later, under his pontifical rule, were very largely to transform the Curia from a centre of aristocratic favouritism and close prelatial patronage, to a corporation of scholars and expert officials. Among those whom the Pope summoned to Rome after his election (1700) was Fr. Joseph Maria, whom he made one of the Consultors of the Congregation of Rites. Fr. Joseph, in addition to his great linguistic reputation, was now further well-known for three principal works, all of them abounding in that minute and extensive learning which the scholars of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries knew so well how to set forth. The first of these productions was his *Codices Sacramentorum nonagennis Annis Vetustiores* (Rome 1680), a doctrinal literary monument to which subsequent authorities on the subject, from Père Chardon, O.S.B. (d. 1771) downward, owe deep obligation. The same can be said with reference to the *Institutiones Theologicæ Antiquorum Patrum*, in three volumes (8vo, 1709-12), which in this, the period of theological decay, did much to confirm the orthodox in the great battle against the Jansenists and the (Cartesian) school of pseudo-mystics. Church music also received a notable and eminently useful contribution from the same active and able pen in the *Responsalia et Antiphonaria Romanæ Ecclesiæ*, a quarto volume which appeared in 1686.

While he was enriching the Catholic world with these learned expositions, and greatly aiding the Congregation of Rites by his practical wisdom and wide acquaintance with the ceremonies and ritual of the Church, Fr. Tomasi continued to lead the same mortified life that had been his in the cloister. He literally distributed all he possessed to relieve the poor, and very soon the portals of the official residence of the Consultor became more remarkable for the crowd of needy persons who thronged their precincts, than for the showy assemblage of glass coaches and gorgeous liveries of Cardinals and great prelates. It is said that in six months Fr. Tomasi gave away over four thousand gold scudi (ecus d'or) in charity alone! Others besides foreign visitors to Rome condemned this wholesale distribution of alms, a custom which so long made the holy city notorious for the number of its mendicant impostors and sturdy beggars, but even if the result was not always for the good, there can be no doubt as to the absolute single-heartedness and true charity which prompted the holy giver in this particular instance, and after all, it is the intention which matters.<sup>1</sup>

The great learning and distinguished piety of the Consultor, in due

<sup>1</sup> The kindness of the Roman prelates, nobility and gentry to the poor was really remarkable. During the eighteenth century and maybe later, it was the common custom to have the child of high-born parents held at the font by a beggar, who received a rich reward for this sponsorship. See *Rome: its Princes, Priests and People*, vol. ii. pp. 110-11. By F. MacLaughlin (Elliot Stock, 1885).

course marked him out for exalted preferment, and entirely against his inclination he found himself compelled to accept the honours of the Cardinalate. On May 12, 1712, the Red Hat was conferred upon him by his almost lifelong friend, Clement XI, but Cardinal Tomasi did not live long to enjoy his dignity, if such a term can be used where the distinction has been so entirely unsought. He died at his Palazzo in Rome, a very holy death, on January 1, 1713, leaving behind him the reputation of having been one of the most learned scholars and disinterested administrators that had ever served the Church. His venerated name was added to those of the *Beati* by Pius VII, on June 5, 1803. Among the many distinguished persons present at the ceremony in St Peter's on this occasion was Fr. Francis Tomasi, S.J., of the noble house of Lampadusa, a relation of the illustrious Cardinal, now publicly honoured for his sanctity. Fr. Tomasi, together with the Ven. Joseph Maria Pignatelli, it is interesting to recall, was later instrumental in bringing about the restoration of the Society of Jesus in 1814.

[The chief authority for the life of Cardinal Tomasi is the Italian 4to Memoir by D. Bernini (*Vita del Card. Tommasi*), published at Rome 1722, and reprinted 1803. There is also a succinct notice of this great prelate and scholar in the *Biographie Universelle*, Paris, 1840.]

## JANUARY 4

PLUMTREE, BLESSED THOMAS, PRIEST, MARTYR  
(?-1570)

His Christian name is sometimes given as William. He was a priest of the Lincoln Diocese, and had been educated at Corpus Christi College, Oxford (B.A. 1546). When Elizabeth came to the throne he was Rector of Stubton (Lincolnshire), but being unable to accept the new religion, resigned his living, and for a time taught in a school at Lincoln. Being compelled to quit this charge on account of the oath of Supremacy, he appears to have lived privately for a while, till 1569, when at the outbreak of the "Northern Rising" under the Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland, he joined the insurgents in the capacity of chaplain. It is supposed that by this time most of the south of England had, at least, tacitly acquiesced in the Anglican settlement as fixed by Act of Parliament (1559),<sup>1</sup> but in the north and away from the immediate influence

<sup>1</sup> *England and the Catholic Church under Queen Elizabeth*. By Meyer. (Kegan Paul, 1916.)

of the Court and centre of government, things were very different. In those remote counties there were, according to Sir Ralph Sadler, "scarcely ten gentlemen of note that approved of Her Majesty's proceedings in matters of religion."<sup>1</sup> The Northern Rising was chiefly stimulated by two things—the great increase of the penal statutes against the Catholics, and the chivalrous wish to liberate the Queen of Scots, the *de jure* heiress to the Crown, then in strict confinement in Tutbury Castle, Staffordshire. In fact, so strong was this latter feeling that the Countess of Northumberland actually proposed to gain access to the captive Queen—now removed to Coventry—change clothes with her and so facilitate her escape. Meantime, the insurrection gathered force. Mr Plumtree is said to have greatly strengthened the cause by his sermons and exhortations "stirring both high and low" alike. On 16th November the army of the Northern Crusade, with its banner of the Five Wounds, marched to Durham, where the Cathedral was purged of its heretical service books and paraphernalia, and the ancient liturgy restored. Mr Plumtree may have been the celebrant at the solemn Mass which was chanted for the last time in the Church of St Cuthbert the next day (17th), but here the movement may be said to have ended. There does not seem to have been any settled plan of campaign, and in any case the Earls were but indifferent leaders. The Royal Forces under the Earl of Sussex and Sir George Bowes penetrated the disaffected districts, whereupon Northumberland and Westmoreland and most of the leaders fled for security to the Border clans, leaving their unhappy followers to the number of several thousand to the vengeance of the Queen's troops.<sup>2</sup> After the collapse of this extremely ill-managed affair, Bl. Thomas Plumtree and a numerous body of fugitives appear to have escaped in the direction of Carlisle, but were shortly dispersed, when the subject of this notice was among the prisoners taken by the pursuers. He and about thirty other gentlemen were conducted back to Durham, and as "some notable example," so it was asserted, had to be made, notwithstanding the horrible slaughter by martial law that had already taken place, the Bl. Thomas Plumtree was marked down for execution. It is stated that he was offered his life if he would conform, but replied that he "had no desire so to continue living in the world as meantime to die to God." The scene of his martyrdom is now covered by part of the market-place. After undergoing the usual butchery, the mangled remains of the "rebells preacher, Syr Thomas Plomtrie," were

<sup>1</sup> Sadler's *State Papers*.

<sup>2</sup> Sir Robert Cotton, the Bibliophile, once informed Camden, the Antiquary, that he had come into possession of a number of State papers of Elizabeth's Court from which it was clear that the Northern Rising of 1569 was the actual work of Walsingham. Whereupon Camden exclaimed loudly against false informers and "wished that his history had never been written!" See Gillow, *Bib. Dic., Eng. Cath.*, vol. i. p. 113.

left hanging on the gibbet for about ten days, when they were removed and buried in the Church of St Nicholas, Durham. That the deceased was regarded as a person of some note even by his enemies may be gathered both from the fact of this honourable interment, and also from the entry in the graveyard register concerning the burial of "Maistre Plumbetre." A picture representing the martyrdom of the Chaplain of the Northern Rising, who was beatified by Leo XIII, in December, 1886, is preserved at the English College, Rome.

[Gillow : *Bibliographical Dictionary, Eng. Catholics.* Bede Camm : *Lives of the Eng. Martyrs*, vol. ii.]

## JANUARY 7

## WATERSON, BLESSED EDWARD, MARTYR

(?–1593).<sup>1</sup> Beatified Dec. 15, 1929.

He was born in London, and being bred to business, travelled to Turkey with some merchants. While there he had the offer of marriage with a wealthy lady of the country on condition of renouncing Christianity, an offer which, needless to add, was indignantly refused. On his way home, Mr Waterson was received into the Church at Rome by the Rev. Richard Smith, who in 1625 succeeded Bishop William Bishop as Bishop of *Chalcedon* and Second Vicar-Apostolic of England. Proceeding to Rheims as a student, Mr Waterson won the regard of all by his great humility and devotion, and being raised to the priesthood on Mid-Lent Sunday, 1592, shortly afterwards came on the English Mission. His labours for souls, however, were very brief, for being arrested by the priest-hunters under the 27 *Elizabeth*, he was with another seminary priest, named Joseph Lampton, committed to prison. This must have occurred very soon after his arrival in England, for in an autograph postscript to the letter of the Earl of Huntingdon to Lord Burleigh, dated 31st July 1592, appears the following : "Of the two Seminaries [*sic*] taken in Newcastle, one that is Lampton is executed. But Waterson is yet stayed upon his suit made to the Judges and me to have conference with some learned."<sup>1</sup> The result of the conference, if it ever took place, left Mr Waterson firm in the resolution to die for the faith, and he suffered at Newcastle the usual horrible penalties, 7th January 1593.<sup>2</sup>

Owing to the confusion caused among chronologists abroad by the adherence of this country to the "Old Style" or Julian Calendar, some

<sup>1</sup> *Cath. Record Society*, vol. v. p. 212.

<sup>2</sup> The date of the Rev. E. Waterson's martyrdom is given by Challoner as above, 7th January, 1593. The *C. R. S.*, vol. v. p. 293 (note), puts the year at 1594.

doubt existed for a time at Douay College as to the exact date or particulars of his martyrdom, but a priest in writing to the Seminary and describing the execution, declared that when the hurdle was ready to take the holy man to the place of execution, the horse refused to move, in spite of all the urging and beating of the executioners. A certain miller then lent another horse, which after drawing the hurdle a short way, stopped, and could not be got to proceed. So Mr Waterson walked to the gallows on foot, and thence "his soul took its flight to heaven."

[Challoner : *Memoirs. Cath. Record Soc.*, vol. v.]

### JANUARY 7

## HAZE, THE VENERABLE MARIE THERÈSE, FOUNDRRESS OF THE "DAUGHTERS OF THE CROSS" (1782-1876)

BELGIUM—the "Cockpit of Europe," the land reminiscent of wars long before the days of Sterne's *Uncle Toby and the Army, which swore so dreadfully in Flanders!* down through the Napoleonic drama of the Hundred Days to the titanic conflict which convulsed the world, 1914-18—is no less remarkable for another kind of warfare with its attendant heroes, heroines and saints. In the very forefront of this great spiritual army must be reckoned the congregation of the Daughters of the Cross, which ever since 1833, has for nearly a century carried on its manifold labours in schools, hospitals, prisons and penitentiaries, not only in Europe, but in almost every part of the world where religion, instruction or charity have called for the exercise of its zeal. In 1782 there was living in Liège a gentleman named Louis Haze, who was attached to the Court of the Prince-Bishop, one of those stately prelates, doubtless, of the eighteenth century whose ceremonious grandeur has added not a little to the showy pageantry of that somewhat meretricious epoch. M. Haze and his wife, Marguerite Tombeur, had six children, and of these Jeanne, born 27th February 1782, is the subject of this notice. From the first, she was remarkable for great sweetness of disposition, but also for a certain assertiveness which made her the leader of her young companions in all their amusements and pastimes. She and her sister, Fernande, liked nothing better than to dress up as nuns, taking, no doubt, as their models the sisters of a Benedictine Convent in the neighbourhood which they visited occasionally with their mother. The Abbess of the Convent, a woman of remarkable shrewdness—as, indeed, most Reverend Mothers appear to be!—said to Madame Haze on one occasion, with reference to little Jeanne : "Believe me, that



child will one day be an Abbess !” That “day,” however, was long in coming, and many were the momentous happenings that were destined to precede it. In 1792 the French Revolutionary Armies invaded Belgium, then part of the Austrian dominions, and began those impieties and devastations everywhere associated with the enforced propaganda of the “Rights of Man.” In an incredibly short time the most peaceful people in Europe were in a state of violent commotion. Many of the better classes took to flight with whatever they could carry with them, while in the south the hardy rustic population was facing the godless soldiers of Valmy and Jemappes with fowling-pieces and pitchforks in a La Vendée kind of struggle which has been so vividly described by Hendrik Conscience in *Peva, or The War of the Peasants*. M. Haze, as one of the prescribed “aristocrats,” after very nearly falling a victim to *la lanterne* ! had to abandon his home with his wife and children, and so sudden was the flight, that in the confusion of the general exodus, the various members of the household became separated, and for some years they suffered the additional hardships of a divided exile. M. Haze, in fact, never saw his beloved ones again, dying in Germany before the happy reunion could be effected. Jeanne and her sister, Fernande, though separated from their parents, fell into the hands of some good people, and were well cared for, but it was not till after the lapse of several years that they could rejoin their mother and return to Liège. The hard experiences caused by the revolutionary invasion were no doubt an excellent preparation for the future foundress of the “Daughters of the Cross.” One of the great needs of Belgium, like France, at that time of reconstruction after the social deluge, was Christian education. The Catholic orders and their schools having been swept away and no new religious communities having taken their place, the nation was confronted with the dismal prospect of state secularism in the training of the young with all its baleful results. Thoroughly believing in the practical proverb that an ounce of help is worth a ton of pity ! Jeanne and her sister, now both young women, resolved to do what they could in their own immediate circle. They opened a school for children of the middle class in Liège, where sound religious instruction was imparted together with the usual subjects of a superior education. So successful was the venture that they were soon asked by the authorities to take over the management of the parish school of St Barthelmy. Sacrificing their own feelings and interests, the sisters consented, and before long their efforts in this new sphere of labour had resulted in a social betterment that was manifest all over the city. But excellent as may be the effects of well-directed individual labour, these must of necessity perish with those who inaugurate the work, and hence the wisdom underlying the foundation of the religious orders in which practical good is

not only achieved but perpetuated from age to age. The great object of Mlle Haze and her sister was to found an institute of religious women which should devote itself to education and works of charity, but for many years the idea had to remain nothing more than a beautiful dream. Not till after the Belgian Revolution of 1830 could the project be carried out, for under the rule of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, of which Belgium formed part in accordance with the unhappy and enforced "settlement" by the Allied Powers in 1815, no monasteries or convents could be established, owing to the then strong Protestant opposition of the predominant partner, Holland. But with the independence that came of the few weeks' strife—inspired largely by the July Revolution in France—all obstacles were removed. Meanwhile, the sisters had prayed much, and they were confident that God had not only heard their petitions, but that He had given evident indications of His will with regard to the longed-for foundation. They laid the matter before their Confessor, Canon Habets, who seems to have been not only unimpressed, but who actually treated the whole affair with a certain amount of derision! For contrary to the common belief, especially in non-Catholic countries, priests are the very opposite of credulous where spiritual manifestations are alleged—following for the most part the wise attitude of the Church which lets time and trial test all things before cleaving to that which is good. Like the woman in the gospel, however, Mlle Haze persevered, and among the first converts won by her holy persistence was the hostile Confessor himself! With the approval of the Bishop of Liège, arrangements were ere long made for the inauguration of the new work, and on 8th September, the feast of the Nativity of Our Lady, 1833, Jeanne and Fernande Haze and five postulants were clothed by the Bishop of the diocese with the habit of the "Daughters of the Cross." In view of the long years of waiting, and the many trials through which they had passed, the two sisters were allowed to make the perpetual vows at once, the rest taking the temporary ones only. In spite of her great reluctance, Mlle Jeanne, now Mère Marie Thérèse, was elected first Mother-General of the new sisterhood, and this office was perpetuated to her by repeated re-election till her death. The congregation was formally approved by Gregory XVI in 1845. Though at first instituted for education only, the Daughters of the Cross soon undertook other and very varied good works. Thus within a few years of 1833, they were attending to the female inmates in many hospitals, prisons and penitentiaries. Soon branches of the congregation were opened in France and Germany. The first house in England was started at Cheltenham in 1863, and the next at Chelsea (August, 1869). The head Convent now in this country is at Carshalton, an imposing group of buildings that has grown up around the central

edifice, a fine old Caroline mansion, once the country residence of the famous Dr Radcliffe, founder of the Library at Oxford. When eighty years of age (1862), Mère Marie Thérèse had the joy of seeing a band of her sisters making a foundation at Karachi, which thus became the first of many flourishing houses of the Daughters of the Cross in India.

As the conscious life of the holy foundress had begun almost amidst the upheaval and wars of the Great Revolution, so was it destined to close beneath the clouds of persecution and dispersion. The Kultur-Kampf Campaign of Prince Bismarck against the Church in Germany, which reached its culminating point 1875-77, caused many poignant scenes, and not the least of these was witnessed in the latter year, when thousands of nuns and religious were exiled from the Fatherland—going forth many of them bearing on their habits the crosses and medals conferred by the Government for heroic acts and self-sacrificing labours in field and hospital, during the bloody renaissance of the German Empire, 1870-71. Mother Mère Thérèse was happily spared this last sorrow, though it can well be imagined that so spiritual a soul and so courageous a character, would have accepted the catastrophe with the same quiet and holy confidence that had carried her successfully through the crises and difficulties of nearly a century. She passed to her reward 7th January, 1876, leaving behind her, as all such personages do, an inspiring legacy of deep trust in God, indomitable patience and a constant charity for the needs and afflictions of others. Indeed, the record of her life is so entirely merged in that of her foundation that there is comparatively little to detail of herself. Prayer and patience were the great weapons she relied upon to achieve good, and to a wonderful understanding of, and sympathy for, the complexities and waywardness of human nature, was joined a tenderness for the sorrows of the afflicted whatever might be the origin of the trouble in question. The cause of her Beatification was introduced at Rome in 1912, when the title of Venerable was conferred on this veritable *Mulier fortis*, who will, it is hoped, be raised one day to the altars of the Church as another great example and heartening patroness of the cause of active charity on earth.

[An excellent Memoir of the Ven. Thérèse Haze is published by the Catholic Truth Society of London.]

JANUARY 9

PAULINE MARIE JARICOT, FOUNDESS OF THE  
"ASSOCIATION OF THE PROPAGATION OF THE FAITH"  
(1799-1862)

ON this day 1862, died Pauline Marie Jaricot, Foundress of the "Association of the Propagation of the Faith," whose cause has been sent to Rome for the process of Beatification and Canonization. Born at Lyons 22nd July, 1799, the daughter of a rich merchant of that city, Pauline Marie was in her childhood described as "very self-willed and vain" ! but also as "particularly lovable." She left school and "came out" at the extremely early age of fourteen, but notwithstanding the gaieties of a brilliant society—which resolved to enjoy itself despite the downfall of the Empire and the invasion of the Allies—she never lost her love of prayer, and especially her devotion to the Blessed Sacrament. A severe accident followed by a nervous illness prevented her from carrying out the wishes of her parents, and marrying a youthful suitor, who is somewhat quaintly described as "fulfilling all the requirements of an idealistic maiden." Charles Surface or Miss Austen could scarcely have summed up the qualifications of the gentleman in a more detached manner ! When convalescent, Pauline Marie made a pilgrimage of thanksgiving to Fouvrières, the hill of the martyrs, near Lyons, where after holy Mass in the Church she consecrated herself to Our Lady. A sermon that she chanced to hear in the Church of St Nizier, Lyons, not long after her recovery, gave her still further to think. It was a discourse on "Vanity" from Père Wurtz, S.J., and it certainly made one convert. When such a change is brought about a sort of illumination enters the soul showing, as it were, in contrast what is the true and abiding good, compared with what is, at best, merely passing and unsatisfying. From henceforth Pauline Marie's ruling idea was the conversion of souls at home and abroad, by means of prayer, self-sacrifice and labour. She had always exercised a great influence over her brother, Phileas, and now she had the great happiness of seeing him ally himself with her ideal. This young man renounced a career in the world, and entered the College of Foreign Missions in Paris, where he was subsequently ordained priest.

One of the first labours of this remarkable woman was the institution of a sort of union of pious girls of the poorer class, known as "Les Reparatrices du Sacre Cœur de Jesus." The Voltairian spirit of the Revolution, silenced for the most part by the roar of battle and the acclamations of conquest which for ten years accompanied the blood-stained glories of the Empire, broke out afresh after the second restoration of the Bourbons,

and the Catholic revival which accompanied that event was confronted by a great deal of opposition of the most irreligious and aggressive kind. The humble members of the "Union" pledged themselves to prayer for France, and to make reparation by their piety for the daily countless insults offered to the majesty and goodness of our holy Redeemer. Soon, and at the suggestion it seems of the zealous Foundress herself, sums of money began to be collected weekly for the missions of the East, mainly those of China, which after years of comparative neglect, owing of course to the upheaval of Europe which followed the events of 1789, were now coming into favour again with the faithful in several countries. The raising of these contributions, which soon amounted to a very considerable sum, was really the first commencement of the "*Association of the Propagation of the Faith*," but so careful was Pauline Marie to conceal her initiative in the matter, that when the Association was formally established in Paris on 3rd May 1822, her name did not even appear on the list of members, and she was never recognized as Foundress during her lifetime. Another association, that of the "*Living Rosary*," was commenced about this time by the self-effacing subject of this notice, the object of course being prayer for the success of the Apostolate of conversion among the heathens at home and abroad. Pauline Marie must be regarded as one of the chief modern pioneers of women's work in the social services connected with the Church. To ensure properly qualified helpers in this important branch, she purchased in 1834 a fine house and property at Fouvières, which, under the name of "*Loretto*," became the centre for training young women to render constant and effective aid in all works of piety, charity and general utility, where female assistance is most required. One of the first and greatest of the afflictions which were reserved for the latter days of Pauline Marie, was in connection with this foundation. When the Socialist rebellion convulsed Lyons (1834), not long after the opening of the place, "*Loretto*" was occupied by a Communist mob, and much damage done before the invaders were driven out by the military. During this fearfully trying time, the members of the community had to conceal themselves in the cellars of the building in which were also placed the Blessed Sacrament and some of the chief ornaments of the Chapel, under the personal care of Pauline Marie herself. By the death of her father, the Foundress succeeded to a very large inheritance, but even this apparent stroke of good fortune was, in the design of God, to serve as the indirect cause of yet another and almost overwhelming trial for this elect soul. Ever full of generous impulses and schemes for good, Pauline Marie now formed the idea of home colonies where working men and women might be instructed in the true principles of Christian civilization and progress. Unfortunately, she not only took into her confidence, but also

imprudently confided the bulk of her property to a plausible adventurer, and before long nearly the whole amount was lost ! Large numbers of poor persons were also involved in the disaster, and till her death, the Foundress had to bear the hard cross of unmerited censure often of the bitterest kind ! Her actions were even suspected at Rome, but a visit to the Vatican explained matters, and Pauline Marie could return to France at least consoled by the publicly expressed approval of her conduct which came from the paternal lips of Pius IX. The calamities and sorrows of her last years were further supplemented by acute physical sufferings, but like the holy Founder of the "Clerks Regular of Somascha," under very similar circumstances, she, who had really called into being the Association of the Propagation of the Faith, could truly exclaim : "I have done all for the glory of God !" She strictly charged those about her during her mortal illness to refrain from all that might offend even the parties who had been the most hostile to her, and the last words she uttered at her holy death on 9th July 1862, were : "Mary, my Mother, I am entirely yours !"

She was interred beside her parents in the Cemetery of Lyons, but in 1889, her venerated remains were placed in the Chapel of St Francis Xavier in the Church of St Polycarp—a resting-place in every way appropriate, in view of the unwearied missionary zeal of the Apostle of the Indies, and of her who might well be called his spiritual daughter. The cause of Pauline Marie Jaricot, as above stated, has been sent to Rome, and no doubt the day will come when this strenuous worker in the harvest field of the Lord and great model of patience under affliction, will be numbered among the Saints.

[See Notice by Le Roy in *Annals of the Propagation of the Faith*, lxx. Feb. 1907.]

#### JANUARY 11

### WILLIAM CARTER, THE VENERABLE, MARTYR

(?—1584)

AMONG the many brave laymen and laywomen who professed the Faith even to the shedding of blood during the tragic epoch of Elizabeth, the name of William Carter stands forth very prominent. He was by trade a printer, having been apprenticed by his father, John Carter, in 1563 to John Cawood, who although a Catholic, held the important position of printer to the Queen! Carter appears to have learned his business very thoroughly, and he later used his skill to forward the Catholic cause by

the power of the press. For some years he was employed as secretary by Dr Nicholas Harpsfield, who, after holding the dignified position of Dean of Canterbury under Queen Mary, was now (1570-75) a prisoner in the Fleet.<sup>1</sup> Harpsfield was a strong controversial writer. His *Dialogi Sex* against Foxe, the Martyrologist and the Magdeburg Centuriators, had made its mark, and it was no doubt his intercourse with this learned, if not very discreet, divine, and the proof of what could be done by means of polemical writings to answer the almost innumerable slanders against, and misrepresentations of, the Catholic religion, that led Carter to set up a secret press in London for the dissemination of such books and pamphlets. A secret press existed at Henley-on-Thames for a while during this period, and there was another at East Ham, Essex, directed by Fr. Robert Parsons. The last product of the East Ham Press was Campion's famous *Decem Rationes*, numerous copies of which were boldly scattered about the benches of St Mary's Church, Oxford, in June 1581. What Carter did in the way of literary propaganda does not appear, but he was detected in September 1578, and spent a month in the Poultry Counter. In December 1579 Aylmer, Bishop of London, wrote to Lord Burghley: "I have found out a presse of pryntyng with one Carter, a very lewed fellowe, who has been dyvers tymes before in prison for printinge of lewde pamphlets." Among the other "naughtye papystycall books" found in Carter's "Howse," was a work entitled the *Innocency of the Scotyshe Quene*, a translation of a French Apology for the imprisoned Mary of Scots, written by Francois de Belleforest. In 1581, Carter was allowed out on bail for 100 marks (about £66), part of the conditions of his enlargement being that he was not to go beyond three miles from his house in Hart Street, St Olave's, and that he was to hold no intercourse with any "Jesuite Seminarie or Massing Prieste." But although apparently free again, he was in reality a marked man. Next year, his house was searched by the ferocious Topcliffe and his myrmidons, Payne and Morris, and among the incriminating articles found were chalices, vestments and a copy of Campion's *Disputation in the Tower*. This last was the report of the Conference in the Tower arranged by the Government between the illustrious Jesuit and a number of eminent Protestant divines, including Nowel, Dean of St Paul's. Campion, notwithstanding his several fearful rackings, replied so readily to the subtleties of his adversaries, that "even the heretics admired him exceedingly." Carter was lodged in the Tower, and while there was racked to make him divulge the names of the patrons who supported his press, and give information concerning other matters which the Government much wanted to know. But the brave printer answered

<sup>1</sup> *Cath. Record Society*, vol. i. p. 53. He had been there since 1559. "And his cause is for that he would have fled the reame."

never a word, save a few ejaculatory prayers, and so it was resolved to bring him to trial. This took place, 10th July 1584, before the Lord Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, Sir Edmund Anderson, and several other judges. The prosecution was conducted by Thomas Norton, a barrister of strong Puritan tenets, who stressed the point that among the "lewed" and "seditious" books found on Carter's premises, was *A Treatise of Schism*—a polemic which has been attributed both to Gregory Martin and Father Parsons. The work warned the laxer section of English Catholics of the unlawfulness of attending the "hereticall conventicles," while a passage about the slaying of Holofernes by Judith was twisted into an incentive to the Court ladies to assassinate Queen Elizabeth! Carter made a very good defence, and he had no difficulty in exposing the utter absurdity of the last charge about killing the Queen, but a trial for "treason" under the Tudors was but a mummery veiling a murder, and the jury, as directed, returned a verdict of guilty on this occasion after but a quarter of an hour's deliberation. The next morning, 11th January, at Tyburn, William Carter added his name to that glorious band, the English Martyrs, who died in witness of the ancient faith which St Augustine brought from Rome, and which was the nation's spiritual heritage for nigh a thousand years.

[Burton and Pollen : *English Martyrs*, vol. i.]

JANUARY 14

LLOYD, THE BLESSED WILLIAM, PRIEST CONFESSOR

(1614-1679).<sup>1</sup> Beatified Dec. 15, 1929.

THE subject of this notice was born in Carmarthenshire, 1614, and was the son of William Floyd, Esq. The name "Lloyd" was probably adopted afterwards as an *alias*, such practice being very common among priests during the penal times. Mr Lloyd or Floyd, who appears to have been a convert, was admitted as a student at the English College, Lisbon, 1st October 1635, took the College Oath 29th June 1636, and in spite of sets-back to study owing to ill-health, was ordained priest 26th April 1639. He appears to have remained on at the college—probably teaching—when he left for Paris 21st June 1642. Mr Lloyd served for many years on the Welsh Mission, till 1678, when he was arrested in consequence of the "No Popery" *furor* caused by the Oates Plot, and incarcerated in Brecon Jail. He was convicted at the Welsh Winter Assizes at Brecknock of high treason for having taken orders in the Church of Rome, and for remaining in this country contrary to the Statute 27th Elizabeth. Some witnesses at the trial deposed to having seen the accused administer the

<sup>1</sup> The christian name is sometimes given as John, and the surname as Floyd. Canon Croft in his account of the English College, Lisbon, describes it as "William Floyd, or Lloyd."



Sacraments "according to the order and manner of the Catholic Church" (Challoner). Being sentenced to death, he was left for execution, but died in prison 14th January 1679, six days before the date fixed for the execution. The deceased left behind him in writing the following declaration, which he had intended to read to the people at the place of martyrdom :—

"In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, Amen.

"Dearly beloved Countrymen,—It is even by God's holy providence that now I am come to the last hour of my mortal life in this miserable world, and, therefore, am desirous to give an account to all the world in what faith and religion I lived while I was in this world, and in which I am resolved to depart out of this world, which is the only holy Catholic and apostolical faith and religion (that is) the very same in all points as the apostles themselves lived and died in after they received the Holy Ghost, which our Saviour promised to send them to guide them into all truth, and to remain with his Church for ever, and I do renounce all errors and mistakes contrary to the same faith and religion, holding all the holy word of God, written or unwritten, to be true and revealed to the patriarchs and prophets in the time of the Old Testament, and also revealed by Our Saviour Jesus Christ to his apostles and disciples in the New Testament, and by their successors declared to the rest of the world in the same right sense, as the Holy Ghost, according to Our Saviour's promise, directed them to teach all truth which is the only faith in which a man can be saved and no other ; for it is said in the holy scripture that there is but one faith, one God and one baptism, and St Paul in another place expressly saith that without faith it is impossible to please God ; and every man by natural reason may easily know that without pleasing God no man can be saved ; for no man can possibly be saved in spite of God Almighty (that is) whether he will or no. Therefore, seeing none can be saved without pleasing God, and that none can please God without faith ; and seeing there is no faith but one, and that one is that which our Saviour Christ taught to his apostles, it behoveth every man to find it out, and live and die in it, although they lose all that they have in the world, and their lives to boot seeing that it is of no small importance to be saved or damned for ever. And to find out that apostolic faith without which no man can please God, nor consequently be saved, we must find out the eldest faith among Christians which was planted by our Saviour himself amongst his apostles which doth still last and will last for ever ; for our Saviour promised to be with his Church to the world's end, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And this is the reason why I made choice to embrace it, and all others ought to make choice of and embrace

the same to live and die in, to the intent we may be saved souls for ever ; detesting (as I said before) all mistakes and errors contrary to the said one Holy Catholic Apostolic Christian Faith and Roman religion. Nothing can be held to be a true article of faith, but what is firmly grounded upon the holy word of God, taken in the right sense by the guidance of the Holy Ghost ; the rest of controversies may be disputed, but not believed by divine faith.

“ Now, I do further declare that I being of this holy faith and religion, living peaceably in the commonwealth all the days of my life, have been taken suspected to be a popish priest, and have been committed to prison and have been sentenced to die on that account for serving God and administering the holy sacraments according to the rites and ceremonies of the Roman Church, and for nothing else proved against me ; and submitting myself to God’s holy will and all the penalties of the present laws of the kingdom relating thereto, I am heartily willing by God’s holy grace to suffer death upon that account, hoping to be a saved soul by the goodness and mercy of God, and the merits and passion of our Saviour Jesus Christ. And to the intent that I may depart out of this world in love and charity, I do heartily forgive all that have in any wise offended me and beg pardon and forgiveness of all those that I have any wise offended ; and especially I beg pardon of God Almighty for all my heinous offences committed against his divine majesty in thought, word and deed, for which I am heartily sorry, and with the help of his grace, if they were yet undone, I would do my best never to do them ; and this not only for fear of being punished for my sins, but out of the hearty love I bear to my dear God, who hath created me, and redeemed me with his most bitter passion in the person of our Saviour, true God and man (and had sanctified me with the grace of the Holy Ghost in soul and body). As for the subversion of government or conspiring against his majesty’s life, I do sincerely protest in the presence of Almighty God, as I hope to be a saved soul, that I had not the least knowledge of it till it was noised abroad among the common people, nor did I at any time after know anything of it, otherwise than by common report after discovery, but was duly wont to pray for his majesty and his royal consort ; and so (God willing) intend to continue as long as I have breath begging of God Almighty to send his majesty a prosperous reign whilst he lives in this world, and after this miserable life to grant them both eternal crowns in everlasting bliss ; and the same everlasting happiness I wish to my own soul, I wish also to my enemies, to all that are here present, and the rest of the world. Amen.”

[Canon Wm. Croft : *Historical Account of Lisbon College*, p. 198.  
Challoner : *Memoirs*.]

JANUARY 21

WOODFEN, THE VENERABLE NICHOLAS, PRIEST  
AND MARTYR  
(?-1586)

OWING to the dangers of the time, this priest adopted the *aliases* of Woodfen and Devereux, but his real name appears to have been *Wheeler*. He was born at Leominster, in Herefordshire, and at the Grammar School of the town was regarded as one of the "best scholars." Whether he was an "old Catholic," or a convert, there is nothing to show, but later, he went to Rheims and was there ordained priest, 25th March, 1581. The time of his coming to London was one of great excitement, owing to the success of the first Jesuit missionaries—"a new race of persons far worse than the papists!"—as the Knoxites had declared in Scotland a year or two before. The Government, in consequence, exercised great vigilance, prosecutions for recusancy were many, and later, Mr Recorder Fleetwood in his letter to Lord Burleigh reported that "we have been every day occupied with Seminarie Priests, Massemongers, libellers and such like." For some time after his arrival in town, Mr Woodfen was in great poverty, until befriended by an old school-fellow and brother priest, named Davis. This latter was chaplain to Lady Tresham, who lived in Tuttle Street, Westminster. Her husband, Sir Thomas Tresham (1543-1605), famous for his building activities at Rothwell, Rushton, and Lyveden, and for being the father of Francis Tresham, the Gunpowder Plot conspirator—was then in the Fleet Prison, for harbouring priests and for being "a stubborn recusant." At this time, Mr Woodfen was in such straits that, as he declared: "he had neither money to buy him any meat nor scarce any clothes upon his back!" The good chaplain of the Treshams interested the Hon. Francis Browné, brother of Lord Montague of Cowdray, in his friend's case, and shortly afterwards Mr Woodfen was found lodgings with one Barton, a haberdasher in Fleet Street. Now, at this period, the Bar had not been closed against Catholics by statute, and there were many gentlemen of the Inns of Court who professed the ancient faith and followed the law, in spite of the Orders of the Privy Council of 20th May, 1569, to the Benchers "to expel all Papists out of Commons."<sup>1</sup>

To facilitate his ministrations among his co-religionists in the Temple and the other legal Societies, Mr Woodfen assumed the student's gown, and so "did much good among the gentlemen of the Inns of Court."

<sup>1</sup> 4th April 1582.

<sup>2</sup> See Author's *Short History of the English Bar*, p. 42. (Swan, Sonnenschein & Co. 1908.)

It was not likely, however, that he could escape very long unobserved, and coming under the notice of Norris, the pursuivant, *i.e.* detective, had to leave London for Hoxton (Hogsden), where there seems to have been some Catholics in residence. Mr Woodfen hid for a while in a secret hiding-place of Sir Thomas Tresham's country-house in the then suburban village, but being taken not long afterwards was, on the 19th January, 1585 (O.S.), "at Justice hall in the Olde Bailly, condemned for treason in being made a Seminarie priest at Reymes in ffrance by authoritie of the B. of Rome since the feast of St John Baptist in anno primo of her Ma<sup>ts</sup> reigne, and in remayninge hereafter the tearme of xl<sup>ty</sup> days after the Session of last parliament."<sup>1</sup> Two days later this zealous priest suffered with great constancy at Tyburn. He was a man of fine appearance and great courtesy, qualities which in the natural order had been of no small assistance to him in his spiritual endeavours to save the flotsam and jetsam of the ancient religion of this country during the stress and storm of the Elizabethan wreckage.

[Burton and Pollen : *Eng. Martyrs*, C.R.S. vols., especially 5.  
Challoner : *Memoirs*.]

JANUARY 21

STRANSHAM, THE BLESSED EDWARD,  
PRIEST, MARTYR

(1557-1586). Beatified Dec. 15, 1929.

THOUGH described in the written report of his examination before the Privy Council, 17th July, 1585, as *oriundus in Civitate Oxon*, the patronymic of the martyr certainly suggests some possible remote connection with the village of Strensham in Worcestershire. The name is also spelt Strancham and Transom. The subject of this notice matriculated at St John's College, Oxford, at the age of eighteen, and in February, 1575-6, was determined for the B.A. degree (Oxford Register). In April, 1577, he went to Douay College, together with Nicholas and Richard Nayler. He migrated with the rest of the professors and students to Rheims in April, 1577, but owing to a continuous and troublesome flux, came to England for his health in October of the same year. On his return to Rheims, he brought back with him four students for the priesthood, and in due course was ordained at Soissons in December, 1580. He said his first Mass on St John's day (27th December), at which the Rector, Dr Allen, preached a very impressive sermon. After remaining

<sup>1</sup> C.R.S., vol. v. p. 129.

in France till the July of the next year, Mr Stransham set out for England *via* Rouen and Dieppe, landing at Newhaven, and then proceeding, it seems, to London, under the name of "Mr Barber." His arrival coincided with that exciting time in the history of the English Catholics, when the "Spanish Policy" of armed intervention for the restoration of the Ancient Faith and the liberation of the imprisoned Queen of Scots was undoubtedly in favour with many of the recusants. Most of these latter were all for Spanish interference just as the Huguenots of France at that time were all for English and even German interference! or as the Jacobites of a later date were for any kind of foreign intervention that would secure the "Happy Restoration."<sup>1</sup> The head-centre of this queer "Squire Western" kind of international conspiracy in 1581 was apparently Sir Francis Throckmorton, who later fell into the hands of the Government, and who after being several times racked in the Tower, made a confession that involved Mendoza, the Spanish Ambassador, and many English Catholics. He was executed at Tyburn. Among those who were suspected by Government of complicity in this daring scheme was our missionary, who was, indeed, specially mentioned in an unsigned paper sent by the English Ambassador in Paris, Sir Edward Stafford (1st-11th June 1584), in connection apparently with the Throckmorton affair. It runs: "Edward Transom, prest, called by the name of ffraunces Willec, ys habred by Mathew Wallen, gent and student in lyons inn: which Transom goeth in a sheep's collered goun and every nighte lieth in the chamber of the said Mathew Wallen within the inn." So far from "Edward Transom" being in London at this time, he was actually in Paris, almost dead with consumption and "only kept alive by asses milk!" In fact, the only matter of consequence in which our missioner was concerned during his first stay in this country was with reference to the burning question of the hour, whether the English Catholics—to save themselves from the ruinous fines of £20 a month<sup>2</sup>—were justified in attending, as a mere matter of form, the parish churches on Sundays, as ordered by statute. Mr Stransham brought with him to England the written opinion of Father, afterwards Cardinal Toledo, that such attendance, even in view of the persecution raging in this country, was *not lawful*.

When Mr Stransham returned to France in July, 1583, he was accompanied by ten students intended for the Rheims College. He had always by all accounts, a great influence with young men, and not the least part of his vocation seems to have been the discerning and guiding of those who believed themselves to be called by God to the service of the altar.

<sup>1</sup> Even the Hanoverians called in foreign troops during the 1745 Rising, and the Government of Geo. III. used Hessians against the revolted American colonists.

<sup>2</sup> Equal to at least £250 in present currency!

What he did in France during the two years of his sojourn is not clear. That much of the time was spent in illness we have already seen, but there can be little doubt that he was also much in the company of Thomas Throckmorton, brother of the conspirator already referred to, and one of the agents of the Queen of Scots in Paris. That ever-shifting plotter, Charles Paget, who spent half his life abroad scheming for one side or the other, must have often met Mr Stransham, and the reader may well conjecture whether the subsequent arrest of the priest in London was not in part due to information supplied by this very sinister and dangerous person.<sup>1</sup> In July, 1585, Mr Stransham crossed over to England. He walked through Sussex to London, resting at Copping's Court and Farborough on the way. When in town, he lived for a few days with a Mr and Mrs Ferres (Ferrers?) at their house in Bishopsgate, where he said Mass. It was here that he was arrested, being probably betrayed by one Roger, *alias* Berden, a spy of Walsingham's, who had been with him in Paris. The pursuivants also seized a chalice, paten, super-altar and some vestments, and as Mr Stransham was "saying his service," when the law officers broke in, it seems certain that the arrest was made while he was actually saying Mass. The juridical examination of the accused as before mentioned, took place 17th July, but the trial was postponed it seems till the close of the year, when Mr Stransham was condemned to death for being made a Seminary priest at Rheims and exercising his ecclesiastical functions in this country. He suffered the barbarous penalties attached to treason at Tyburn on 21st January, 1586, together with another priest, Mr Nicholas Woodfen (*q.v.*). Dr Bridgewater, in his *Concertatio Ecclesiæ Catholicæ*, thus writes of these two martyrs: "Mr Edward Transham and Mr Woodfen, Catholic priests, after they had given many and various arguments of their piety, charity and Christian fortitude in gathering together the scattered sheep of Great Britain, the time being now come, in which they were both to glorify God by an illustrious profession of their faith, and confirm their brethren by the voluntary shedding of their blood, being approved by the testimony of faith, they offered their souls and bodies a living and holy sacrifice to God, their creator and redeemer." Among those present at this last glorious but awful scene, was Mr William Freeman of Magdalen College, Oxford, who though a Protestant, was so impressed by the constancy of the sufferers, that he shortly afterwards embraced the Catholic faith, and going to Rheims, was there subsequently ordained.

[Challoner : *Memoirs*. Burton and Pollen : *Eng. Martyrs*.]

<sup>1</sup> This Paget was the fourth son of the first Baron Paget. He ultimately made his peace with the Government, and was pensioned by James I. He died February, 1612.

JANUARY 28

VALFRE, THE BLESSED SEBASTIAN, CONFESSOR  
(1629-1710)

WHEN the plague was raging at Verduno (Piedmont), in the early spring of 1629, a necessitous peasant family of the place was forced to flee to the country, and for some months to make its abode in a roughly constructed hut. The poor refugees were the parents, and some of the brothers and sisters of the future "Apostle of Turin," who was born on March the 9th of the above-named year. Trained, thus, from the first in the school of hardship and adversity, Sebastian Valfrè grew up with a great sympathy for suffering and poverty, and like the St Curé d'Ars when a child, he was, even as a boy, never so happy as when relieving, as far as the slender means of his own circumstances would permit, the wants of the outcast and the destitute. After the family had returned home, and little Sebastian had reached his twelfth year, he was sent first to the Franciscan School at Alba, and then to another at Bra. At both places he was noted for a "rigid regard" for truth, and for a kindness which won the hearts of all. Hence the great scholastic success which his high intelligence and habits of close study achieved, aroused no feelings of envy among his fellow-students, and having decided upon an ecclesiastical career, he received at the age of seventeen (1646) the first two minor orders. He then proceeded to Turin to pursue his theological studies under the Jesuits, and after a brilliant and edifying course in philosophy and the preliminaries of divinity, was ordained Subdeacon on 17th December, 1650, by Monsignore Bergera, Archbishop of the Province. Next year he proceeded Deacon, and experiencing a vocation to the Oratorian Fathers, was accepted as a novice on the Feast of St Philip, 1651, by Father Ciambini, Superior of the House in Turin. He was ordained priest at Alba, 23rd February, 1652, and to the great joy of his family and friends, said his first Mass at Verduno. As a Deacon Dom Sebastian had already begun to preach publicly at Turin, where his sermons on Sundays and Feasts from the first attracted large numbers of hearers. These discourses were not only most carefully prepared, but they were sanctified by great bodily mortification. Even as a child, Dom Sebastian had practised fasting on bread and water during Lent, and while at school at Bra had not only submitted cheerfully to the domination of a severe and exacting pedagogue, but had been quite content, even during the severe Turin winters, to sleep nightly on some straw in a barn, with no covering but that of a blanket supplemented by his own day clothes! Of such stuff are the Saints made! The year following his ordination, Dom Sebastian was named Prefect of the Little Oratory at

Turin (1653). The "Little Oratory," which is attached to every house of the Oratorians, is a sodality or assemblage of laymen banded together for personal sanctification and works of piety and charity. The idea in practice was the great apostolate of St Philip in Rome, and there can be no Oratory without the little one. Under Dom Sebastian's care, the membership of the Turin branch soon reached three hundred, and the labours of the "Brothers" extended to the hospitals and prisons of the city and district. In addition to his ministrations in the Church of the parish, Dom Sebastian, in the spirit of the apostolic age and these later times, preached frequently in the open places in Turin, especially in the Piazza Carlina, to the many who could not or would not come to church regularly. He visited the chapels of the local schools, orphanages, penitentiaries and prisons for the same holy purpose, and in 1671, after becoming Superior, always delivered discourses on Christian doctrine at the conclusion of Vespers on the Sunday evenings. This incessant and solid instruction gave a lead in the matter to the rest of the clergy, and to its influence must be ascribed the comparative freedom of Turin and the immediate neighbourhood from the deadening heresy of Jansenism, then spreading from France to some of the adjacent countries.<sup>1</sup> Like the St Curé d'Ars in his zeal and mortification, Dom Sebastian also resembled that wonderful model of pastoral holiness in his gift of discerning souls. This remarkable trait was strikingly manifested on several occasions, notably in the case of two priests of the Oratory who were contemplating abandoning their vocation. They chanced to enter, one day, the church where Dom Sebastian was preaching, when the holy man, suddenly breaking off in the middle of his discourse, exclaimed: "Remain in the vocation in which you are called," a reference to *Eph.* iv. 1. The troubled priests took these words as a warning from God, and acting on the advice, found peace of soul. The great secret, of course, of Fr. Sebastian's success in the pulpit and elsewhere, as before observed, lay in his spirit of prayer and constant interior mortification. He meditated for an hour every morning, and commenced each action with prayer. He recited the divine office at the appointed times on his knees, and before leaving home to go on his rounds of duty or charity, always visited the Blessed Sacrament and invoked the aid of Our Lady. Though more than once pressed by Prince Victor Amadeus of Savoy to accept the Archbishopric of Turin, he always refused the proffered dignity. In fact, he endeavoured on all occasions to "seek

<sup>1</sup> Not only was Jansenism a determined attempt to graft a kind of Calvinism on to the teaching of the Catholic Church, but to its severe rigidity must be attributed much of that gloom which is so often seen in the characters of persons of no religious belief, especially in France. Indeed, it is to the spiritual cancer of Jansenism that our neighbours largely owe the notorious infidelity of so many of their countrymen before and since the Revolution.



the lowest place " in the estimation of men, concealing his great learning under a show of ignorance, expatiating on his peasant origin, and affecting a neat, but somewhat shabby, dress when in public. He seldom or never wore his doctor's gown of purple edged with ermine, conferred upon him in 1656, and like the Curé d'Ars had such an aversion to sitting for his portrait that his likeness had to be painted by stealth. Like the illustrious Saint of the French Church of the nineteenth century also, he was never tired of reminding others that " The ills of this world are mere trifles, and that sin is the only evil worth troubling about." He showed great emotion on reading the Passion, and when asked by a priest for advice on the subject of personal holiness, remarked that the very thought of having to say Mass daily ought to be enough to ensure a high standard of sanctity. Though he never purposely sought the society of the great, he was for many years the sage counsellor of the Prince of Savoy, Victor Amadeus, and the instructor of that ruler's two daughters, the Princesses Maria Adelaide and Maria Louisa. The former, who was afterwards the Duchess of Burgundy, died in giving birth to the future Louis XV of France. Almost his last words to Prince Victor were: " Be ever dutiful to the Holy See "—a piece of good counsel mainly, it seems, in view of the Church and State difficulties which subsequently resulted in the See of Turin being vacant for some fourteen years (1713-27). The humble submission of the illustrious Fénelon to the decision of Rome in the matter of the condemned propositions on " The Maxims of the Saints," filled Dom Sebastian with holy joy, and he gave thanks for that crowning glory of the Archbishop of Cambrai in a short but fervent exclamation before the Fathers of the Turin Oratory. When the Government of Savoy was forced by fear of its powerful neighbour, Louis XIV, to proceed against the Waldensian Protestants in the valleys of the Northern Alps (1685-6), none apparently disapproved of the violent method of conversion more than Fr. Sebastian, and when crowds of the unhappy sectaries were subsequently incarcerated in the Citadel of Turin, he hastened to alleviate their sufferings by large gifts of money, clothes, medicines and other necessities. He mingled with the prisoners and, when occasion presented itself, took the opportunity of affording the poor people a true account of the teaching of the Catholic Church. These instructions, so different from the traditional perversions and travesties of Catholicism current among the Vaudois, led to a number of conversions, and even those who refused to be convinced were won by the all-pervading kindness of this remarkable man.

The charity shown by the Blessed Sebastian to the Vaudois (1685-6) was repeated on a greater scale during the protracted siege of Turin by the armies of Louis XIV in 1706. Unable to endure any longer the domineering interference of the mighty monarch of France, Prince Victor

Amadeus had espoused the cause of the Allies in the War of the Spanish Succession, and from May to September his capital endured the ever-increasing severities of a rigorous investment. All during this time Fr. Sebastian was unwearied in his efforts to sustain the spirits and determination of his fellow-citizens, no less than in his ministrations to the sick and wounded. On the 7th September, he knew, it is supposed by inspiration, that relief was at hand, for he ordered a *Te Deum* to be sung, and shortly afterwards the allied armies under Prince Eugene burst through the French lines and raised the siege.

In addition to the sufferings which he inflicted on himself, Fr. Sebastian had much to endure from others. His students were frequently listless and inattentive, his lectures to them, as Master of Novices, seemed very often to bear no fruit, despite the prayer and care he bestowed on these periodic instructions. He was never tired of exhorting these young aspirants "to give yourselves to prayer, and try by it to procure first, the amendment of your faults, then the practice of Christian virtues, and finally a great love of God" (*Advice to Novices*). It is further related that once, after Fr. Sebastian had resigned the Prefectship of the House, he was rebuked by the new, and apparently singularly unobservant, Superior before a stranger "for a love of dissipation!" which unmerited reprimand he bore with his habitual self-effacing submission.

In December, 1709 he seems to have had a presentiment of his approaching death, for he remarked to a friend on parting: "Till we meet again in Paradise." On 24th January, 1710, the Blessed Sebastian preached for the last time, and also consoled a criminal under sentence of death. Next morning after Mass he was taken ill, and had to keep his bed. After lingering for several days in great agony but also constant prayer, the "Apostle of Turin" calmly expired on 30th January, having received the last rites of the Church and begged pardon of the community for any faults he might have committed. When asked whether he regretted dying, Fr. Sebastian replied: "As I have no attachment to anything in this world, why should I regret leaving it!" Father Sebastian Valfrè was declared Venerable by Pius VIII (1829-30) and beatified by Gregory XVI, 20th May, 1831.

[*Life* by Lady Amabel Kerr.]

JANUARY 29

ST FRANCIS OF SALES, BISHOP AND CONFESSOR  
(1566-1622)[For Life of this Saint see Butler's *Lives of the Fathers, Martyrs, and other Saints*, vol. i.]

JANUARY 30

ST HYACINTHA MARISCOTTI  
(1585-1640)

THE life of this great servant of God illustrates yet again the triumph of grace over Nature. She was born at Vignanello, near Viterbo, her parents being Mark Anthony Mariscotti and Ottavia Orsini, both of the noble rank which ever since the days of the *Optimates* of ancient Rome, has had such a social value in Italy. Very devout as a child, Hyacintha acquired as she grew older, habits of worldliness which, though they happily never developed into anything worse, prevented for many years the attainment of that high sanctity which ultimately added her name to the Saints of the Church. Disappointment at not being able to marry the object of her affection, the Marquis Cassizuechi, is said to have directed her thoughts to the cloister, and about the age of twenty she entered the Convent of St Bernardine of Sienna at Viterbo, where as a child she had been educated. As chagrin and not piety was the motive of her choice, she availed herself to the utmost of the privileges then apparently allowed by the somewhat elastic rule of the house. Her cell was furnished with considerable sumptuousness, she paid and received visits of ceremony, and had her own kitchen and attendants. Her habit, too, was made of finer materials than that of the other nuns, who seem to have followed in their mode of life the easy-going medley of piety and social amenities which marked so many of the communities of Canonesses at that time, and indeed for long after. After ten years of thus trying to make the best of both worlds, Sister Hyacintha came to recognize that her mode of life ought to be in keeping with her religious profession. She in consequence cast away her fine apparel, put on a mean habit, and discarded the costly furniture of her cell. She publicly begged pardon of the community for the disedification she might have caused, and henceforth consistently practised a variety of severe bodily austerities. When the plague visited Viterbo, she not only devoted herself day and night to the care of the sick, but was instrumental in establishing two Confraternities, called the Oblates of Mary (*Sacconi*).

the relief of the poor, and infirm, and of prisoners. Even in the heyday of her worldliness, the holy Foundress had cultivated a tender devotion to Our Lady, and after what may be called her "conversion," this saving sentiment of piety became of course intensified. It is said that her new and most sanctified mode of life was honoured by many spiritual graces and favours, such as visions and ecstasies, while her unstinted charities and constant solicitude for the welfare of the unfortunate generally, endeared her to all classes of the citizens. Her holy death at Viterbo on 30th January, 1640, was the signal for great demonstrations of sorrow and appreciation, crowds taking part in the obsequies and already referring to the deceased as *la Santa*! Sister Hyacintha was beatified by Benedict XIII in 1726, and canonized by Pius VII 14th May, 1807.

*N.B.*—The "Oblates of Mary," established by St Hyacintha Mariscotti, must not be confused with the "Oblates of Mary Immaculate," a Society of Priests first formed at Marseilles by the Rev. Charles de Mazenod, 1815-16. He afterwards became Bishop of the diocese. This foundation is now widely spread over the Catholic world, the Fathers being engaged in parochial and missionary work. The Rules and Constitution of the Congregation were approved by Pope Leo XII in 1826.<sup>1</sup>

[Leon de Clary: *Lives of the Saints and Blessed of the Three Orders of Saint Francis*. Taunton, 1885.]

## FEBRUARY 1

MORSE, S.J., THE BLESSED HENRY, MARTYR  
(1595-1645). Beatified Dec. 15, 1929.

HE was a native of Norfolk, and was born 1595. Both his parents were Protestants, and it being decided after he had finished his classical studies that he should qualify for the Bar, he came to London to keep his terms at one of the Inns of Court. By a sort of irony of destiny, these hostels of the law were, even in the worst of the penal times, the favourite resort of Catholics, though the Bar had been closed to the professors of the ancient faith after the Gunpowder Plot of 1605. The statute (3 James i. c. 5), however, was constantly evaded down to the Revolution of 1688, and it is possible that Mr Morse may have become acquainted with Catholics while a student, but be this as it may, he soon began to entertain serious doubts as to the claims of the Protestant Established Church, and in 1618 left England for Douay College. He had by this time "Considered all the arguments with sincerity in the light of truth, and with respect to his

<sup>1</sup> *The Religious Houses of the United Kingdom*. (London: Burns, Oates and Washbourne.)

soul's salvation alone " (Fr. Corby, S.J.). He pursued his philosophy and theology course at the English College, Rome, where he was noted for "piety towards God, obedience to his superiors, and charity towards his companions."

After being ordained priest in 1624, he almost immediately came on the English mission, only to be seized shortly after landing and thrust into a dungeon at York Castle, where for three years he endured all the miseries of want, filth and cold. His sufferings, however, were somewhat alleviated by the companionship of a fellow-prisoner, Fr. John Robinson, of the Society of Jesus. He also laboured for the spiritual betterment of some of the felons, and two of these latter, a man and a woman, repented of their crimes and went to the scaffold professing themselves Catholics. Even the judges who came to hold the Assizes were impressed by the complete change for the better that had been effected in these notorious criminals, and owned that Mr Morse had succeeded in making them amend their lives. It was probably the good impression thus afforded that caused the subject of these remarks to be reprieved and banished, which he was in 1627, when he at once made his way to the Jesuit College of Watten in Belgium. He had before coming to England declared his intention of joining the Society of Jesus, and the hard "noviciate" in York Castle seems to have confirmed him in that resolution. At Watten his usual exemplary piety greatly edified all beholders, while his unflagging zeal found abundant scope in ministering to the many Catholic soldiers then in Flanders, as part of the national contingent sent to aid the Protestant allies in their struggle with the Imperialists during this stage of the Thirty Years' War. But by 1636 Fr. Morse was back in London, then in the grip of one of the oft-recurring plagues of the period. He was unwearied in his spiritual labours among the sick of all denominations, and in a comparatively few weeks is said to have visited over four hundred families. It was, however, this heroic and self-sacrificing devotion to one of the most trying of duties that indirectly brought about the second arrest of the zealous missionary. He was indicted before the Lord Chief Justice (Sir John Bramston) for having heard the confession of a nobleman, and having (presumably) administered the extreme unction to a dying woman. His Lordship, "a very patient hearer of cases," was, on the whole, favourable to the accused, and the jury found him "guilty of being a priest," but "not guilty on the charge of seducing His Majesty's subjects." Much sympathy seems to have been aroused for one who had shown himself so courageous and untiring during the late pestilence, and the King, Charles I, who was indignant at the prosecution of so worthy a man, shortly afterwards commuted the sentence of death to one of banishment. More the King, of course, dared not do, in view of the fierce Puritan opposition

in Parliament, which was continually calling out for severe measures against the "Sons of Belial," as the Catholics were generally termed by these gloomy fanatics. After returning to Flanders, Fr. Morse resumed his duties as military chaplain, this time attending chiefly to the English regiment commanded by Sir Henry Gage. Sir Henry was a member of the ancient Catholic family, the Gages of Firlie (Sussex), and later achieved a noted place in history as Governor of Oxford for Charles I during the Civil War. He died fighting gallantly for the royal cause, 11th January, 1644, and was buried in the chapel of Christ Church, Oxford.

The year that his Cavalier patron was slain, Fr. Morse returned to the English mission, the scene of his labours being on this occasion the north of England. He was seized by the priest-hunters at a cottage on the borders of Cumberland, where he had gone to attend a dying person, and after escaping from custody, was again recognized, arrested, and lodged in Durham Jail. Having been previously convicted in London, he was sent to the capital by ship, his Puritan captors no doubt fearing that a journey by road would be too risky in view of the large bodies of Cavaliers about, who would certainly have delivered the reverend captive by force. While on shipboard Fr. Morse had much to suffer from the brutality of the crew, the seafaring element being at that period for the most part violently anti-Papal and anti-Royalist. The vessel touched at Yarmouth on the way, where Mr Morse, the Protestant brother of the captive priest, was in practice as a well-to-do attorney. The lawyer did his best to relieve the immediate wants of his near relative, and later when sentence of death had been passed upon him in pursuance of his previous conviction, came up to London and used every possible influence to get the capital penalty again remitted. But the Parliament was then in power, and the sentence was ordered to be carried out. While in prison (Newgate?), Fr. Morse was visited by crowds of persons of the first quality, all anxious to get some words of advice or consolation from so holy and famous a man. Among the many callers was the French Ambassador, the Marquis de Sabran, who came to ask a blessing for the young King of France (Louis XIV), the Queen-Mother, and the rest of the royal family. On the morning of the execution, or martyrdom rather (1st February, 1645), Fr. Morse, by the connivance of the jailer, said Holy Mass with great devotion in his cell, and then took a cheerful leave of all the prisoners. The Sheriff showed him much courtesy, causing straw to be placed in the hurdle, and addressing him with all politeness. At the latter end of the Oxford Road the French Ambassador and suite in carriages and on horseback joined the procession, and accompanied it to Tyburn. Being arrived at the place of his martyrdom Fr. Morse turned to the vast crowds and delivered the following address:

"I am come hither to die for my religion, for that religion which is professed by the Catholic Roman Church, founded by Christ, established by the Apostles, propagated through all ages by a hierarchy always visible to this day, grounded on the testimonies of Holy Scriptures, upheld by the authority of Fathers and Councils, out of which in fine, there can be no hope of salvation. Time was when I was a Protestant, being then a student of the law in the Inns of Court in town, till being suspicious of the truth of my religion, I went abroad into Flanders, and upon full conviction renounced my former errors, and was reconciled to the Church of Rome, the mistress of all Churches. . . . I pray that my death may atone for the sins of this nation, for which end and as testimony of the one true Catholic faith, confirmed by miracles now as ever, I willingly die."

It was declared by the prosecution at his trial that Fr. Morse had "perverted to the Church of Rome" more than 560 persons in London alone!

[Foley: *Records*, S. J. Challoner: *Memoirs*.]

FEBRUARY 3

## JOHN NELSON, THE BLESSED, MARTYR

(1534-1578)

THE Rev. John Nelson, son of Sir William Nelson of Skelton, "within two miles of York," was born 1534, the very year that saw the first severance of this country from the Apostolic See and the Universal Church. John Nelson was, in every sense of the word, a pillar of orthodoxy, having "great faith and a loving zeal for God's cause." Even before the prohibition came from Rome against Catholics attending the parish churches after the accession of Elizabeth, the future martyr saw the peril of this outward conformity, mere subterfuge though it was to escape the enormous monthly fines for staying away from the heretical worship by law established, and he was able to persuade many to suffer the loss of their worldly goods rather than run the risk of perversion. On the other hand, nothing must have more brought home to the people the change in religion than the state of the parish churches within a few years of Queen Mary's death. Rood-screens, crucifixes and holy images had been hewn down, altars replaced by wooden tables—profanely styled "oyster boards"—mural paintings, whitewashed, and the very altar-stones upon which had rested the most Sacred Body and Blood of Christ, defaced and "put to common use"—which "use" generally meant a position on the threshold of the church, so that they might be trodden under the feet of men! Then the new clergy, who in so many parishes had replaced the dispossessed priests—what a contrast! Utterly ignorant men were these, very often mere low traders and broken adventurers

who could just read the "new-fangled service"—"ministers of Satan"—who made coarse abuse of the Pope and blasphemies against the Mass, the Holy Mother of God, and the Saints, do duty for the Catholic discourses of former times.<sup>1</sup> What a martyrdom for the old and sincere faithful to have had to associate, even through dire necessity, with such profaners of the nation's age-long beliefs! John Nelson was not only never tired of denouncing the evil of conformity, but he used to say that England would never be restored to the Church until martyrs had shed their blood for the Faith. With prophetic voice he often added that he believed that he himself would one day die in that blessed cause! In 1573, when forty years of age, he crossed over to Douay, and within two years had the happiness of seeing two of his four brothers, Martin and Thomas, follow his example.

The course of theological study followed at Douay and later on at Rheims, at that time, appears to have been an intensive one, judging by the comparative rapidity with which the aspirants to the priesthood were ordained. The great schism from Rome and the train of heresies which had followed in its wake, had called forth a vast library of controversial literature, chiefly written by the Jesuits, in which the whole cycle of doctrine impugned by the innovators, was admirably stated and defended. Never in the history of the Church had there been such a theological output as during the whole of this period. The rich and varied expositions which had their common centre around the Catechism of the Council of Trent, embraced the learned productions of the Thomastic-Scotist Jesuit theologians, Gregory of Valentier, Francis Suarez, Gabriel Vacquez and Didacus Ruiz. In Germany, the cradle of the Reformation, St Peter Canisius, S.J.—recently declared a Doctor of the Church (1925)—was writing whole bookshelves of divinity against his Lutheran antagonists, while in Italy Robert Bellarmine, not yet a Cardinal, was projecting what was to be the mighty *Corpus Controversarium*. With such a profusion of erudite material at their command, the future missionaries of England only wanted ordinary intelligence and studious application to make their relatively brief training both solid and portentous of fruitful result. During his stay at Douay, Mr Nelson was remarkable for his extraordinary devotion and his obedience to every superior. He was raised to the priesthood on 11th June, 1576, by Monseigneur Bynche, Archbishop of Cambrai—Fénelon's See—and started for England on 7th November following.

<sup>1</sup> Heylin (*History of the Reformation*) remarks that the new clergy "was made up of cobblers, weavers, tinkers, tanners, card-makers, fiddlers, tailors, bagpipers, etc." In 1563 the Speaker of the House of Commons drew public attention to the fact that many of the great market-towns were without either school or preacher, *i.e.*, minister.

For the condition of things ecclesiastical in England at this time, see *The Church under Queen Elizabeth*, by the late Rev. Fredk. Geo. Lee, sometime Vicar of All Saints, Lambeth.



The short missionary life of this zealous and holy priest lasted only one year, but it was marked by two very curious incidents,—the conversion of a Protestant anchoress, and the expulsion of an evil spirit! The day of the anchorite and the “ankerhold” is generally supposed to have ended with the Wars of the Roses, though solitaries for religion’s sake are not confined to any particular period. It is certainly startling to find a specimen of the asceticism of the Middle Ages leading this strange life in the London of Elizabeth, when everything that savoured of “Popery” and “superstition” was believed to be non-existent outside the chapels of the foreign ambassadors. Yet such was the case. The anchoress in question lay a-dying, and though the sick recluse was surrounded by a great number of neighbours, the Rev. John Nelson managed to get access to her, and having cleared the apartment of the curious, reconciled the poor woman to the Church, and administered the last Sacraments to her. In the other matter he was called in to exorcise an evil spirit that “had entered into a man.” The demon yielded to the prayers and ceremonies of Holy Church, but in departing, threatened to “have the priest taken up within a week!” This actually came to pass, for on Sunday, 1st December, as Mr Nelson was saying his Matins, the officers of the law entered, and a little later our missionary found himself in Newgate. In the subsequent examination before the Queen’s High Commissioners, the accused boldly told the occupants of the Bench what they must, indeed, have believed already, that he “had not heard or read that any lay prince” could be the head or supreme governor of the Church! It was the phrase, almost word for word, of the Blessed Thomas More more than forty years before. Pressed to say whether the Queen was a schismatic and a heretic, the prisoner again replied with perfect respect and after careful consideration, that if the Queen be “the setter forth and defender of this religion now practised in England, she is a schismatic and a heretic.” This avowal was enough for a full committal, and on Saturday, 1st February, 1578, Mr Nelson was tried for “denying the Queen’s supremacy and such other traitorous words against her Majesty.” He was of course condemned, and during the few days that remained to him of earthly life, spent the time in prayer, holy recollection, and even abstinence. His brother Thomas, also a priest, who visited him on the morning of his martyrdom, found him absorbed in devotion, “his hands joined and lifted up.” At Tyburn he asked all Catholics present to say with him the *Pater, Ave* and *Credo*, and to these prayers he added the *Confiteor, Miserere* and *De Profundis*. Some of the general crowd showed considerable hostility, and when he said: “I beg you to bear me witness that I die in the unity of the Catholic Church, and for that unity do now most willingly suffer my blood to be shed,” and other like sentiments, cries were raised of “Away with thee and thy Catholic Romish faith!”

When cut down from the gallows for the rest of the butchery, he was heard to pray like another St Stephen for Saul: "I forgive the Queen and all the authors of my death." As in the case of several of the other secular missionaries, the Blessed John Nelson was admitted a member of the Society of Jesus before his death, and he therefore figures in their Calendar as a martyr of the Order.

[Challoner: *Memoirs*. R. B. Camm: *Lives of the Eng. Martyrs*, vol. ii.]

#### FEBRUARY 4

### ST JANE, JOAN, OR JOANNA, OF VALOIS, QUEEN OF FRANCE

(1464-1505)

[For Life of this Saint see Butler's *Lives of the Fathers, Martyrs, and other Saints*, Original Edition, 1756-1759.]

#### FEBRUARY 4

### JOHN DE BRITTO, S.J., THE BLESSED, MARTYR IN INDIA (1647-1693)

THIS worthy successor of St Francis Xavier in the missionary field of India, was born at Lisbon, 1st March, 1647, and resigned brilliant prospects at the Court of John IV, King of Portugal, to become a novice in the Society of Jesus, 1662. After pursuing the usual lengthy course of training of the Society, and being ordained priest, he left in 1673 for India. Upon arriving at Goa, but before commencing the laborious work of conversion, he made a thirty-days' retreat at Ambalacate, not far from Cranganore, the meditations being based on the whole of the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius. To gain the natives, this zealous missionary put on a dress of yellow cotton, adopted a vegetarian diet, abstained from wine, and was enrolled in the noble caste of the *Kshatreyas*, or ruling military order. By the following year (1674) Fr. de Britto was sufficiently acquainted with the Hindu tongue to give instructions to and also converse with, the people, and during the next ten years he traversed a vast area, including Madras, Vellore, Tanjore, Madura and Marava. In 1684 he was imprisoned by one of the local rajahs, but was shortly afterwards released on condition of leaving the country. Four years later he returned to Portugal on business of the Society, and though efforts were made to induce him to accept the Archbishopric of Cranganore, he insisted upon going back to

India as a simple priest. After his arrival he won over to the faith a certain pagan priest of Marava, and it was the complaint of a niece of a former wife of this individual, that led to a violent persecution being stirred up against the Christians. Father de Britto was arrested, and after being conducted from place to place, was, at the instance of the Brahmins, taken to Oreiour and there beheaded, 11th February, 1693. Before his martyrdom, he addressed letters of farewell and edification to Fr. Francis Laynez, Superior of the Mission of Madura, and to several other Fathers of the Society in various places. Many miracles are said to have been wrought at the intercession of this saintly son of St Francis Xavier, who was beatified by Pius IX, 21st August, 1853.

[See *Lives* : (a) One published at Coimbra, 1722 ; (b) *Histoire du B. J. de Britto*, by Père J. Prot, S.J., Paris, 8vo, 1853.]

FEBRUARY 5

## THE JAPANESE MARTYRS

(1597-1647)

BOSSUET, in a passage of almost unsurpassed pulpit eloquence, has described the Mission of St Augustine to England as one of the sublimest episodes in history ! The spectacle, too, of St Francis Xavier going forth to win the "Mysterious Empire" of Japan to the faith of Christ, is no less exalted, and in the short space of two years a band of some three thousand native converts already attested the marvellous missionary zeal of this St Paul of the Far East. The ancient Japanese feudal system, with its overlords and vassals, like the clanship organization of Scotland down to 1745-46, no doubt at the outset, greatly favoured the advance of Catholicism, for when a local magnate was converted, at least a portion of his people followed his example. Father Torres and the other Fathers of the Society of Jesus who came to continue the work of St Francis, preached and ministered with such effect that by 1582 the number of Japanese Catholics had risen to 200,000, and by 1592 to 300,000 ! The Princes of Bungo, Arima and Omura were not only gained over to the Faith, but they sent ambassadors to Portugal, and these same envoys were, it seems, presented to Gregory XIII, and a little later took part in the coronation ceremonies of his successor, Sixtus V (1585), one of whose first acts was to create these interesting strangers knights. A leading factor of the wonderful success of the Society of Jesus in the mission-field of Japan, and elsewhere, was the extreme tact of the Fathers in all their dealings with the various pagan

populations and their rulers. On the other hand, it was the no doubt half-jocular but none the less stupid, remark of the captain of a Spanish trading-vessel, the *San Felipe*, to the effect that the missionaries were but the advanced guard of an army of invasion, that first aroused among the ruling powers in Japan those suspicions and feelings of resentment which ere long kindled into a raging fire of persecution. Already in 1587, the Emperor Hideoshi, more commonly known to Europeans as Taico Sama, who had at first been friendly to the Christians, began hostilities against them. This attitude is asserted to have arisen from the advice given by the Bonzes or Buddhist priests, and especially the chief Bonze, Jacquin, rather than from any original hatred of the religion recently introduced. What was an ominous menace in 1587, became ten years later an open and violent persecution. During that year (1597) twenty-six martyrs, *i.e.* three Jesuits and twenty-three Franciscans suffered death. In addition to these, a number of native Christians also gave their lives for the faith. Among these last were Paul Miki (born 1564), Jean de Gotto (born 1578), and Jacques Kissai (born 1533). The condemned suffered at Nagasaki, on 5th February, each victim being tied to a cross and then transfixed with spears. It is said that as the martyrs proceeded to the place of death they chanted the "Laudate Pueri," as in a joyous procession. Paul Miki appears to have been an especial object of hatred to the pagans, from the fact that ever since his conversion, he had been untiring in his efforts to lead his countrymen from the old superstition of the Gentiles to the light of Gospel truth. Some idea of the highly flourishing state of Christianity in Japan at this period may be gathered from the fact that Fr. Valignano, before his death in 1606, had by his own individual efforts caused the erection of three hundred churches and colleges in various parts of the country! Taico Sama died in 1598, and for fifteen years there was a cessation of persecution. Another embassy, that of the Prince of Sendai, was sent to Pope Paul V (1613), and was honourably received by the Pontiff. Next year, however, the war against the Church in Japan began again. The decree of persecution of the Emperor Jeyasu was renewed by his successor, Hedilada, in 1616, and the oppression of the native Church soon recalled that of Nero and Diocletian in the first centuries of Christianity. On 2nd September, 1622, twenty-seven Christians were publicly beheaded and twenty-five burned alive at Nagasaki. Great numbers of the faithful also were burnt or buried alive in different parts of the Empire, and in 1631, four thousand Christians were drowned at sea—a wholesale method of destruction afterwards adopted by the fiends of the French Revolution against the heroic Vendéans. In 1642-43, ten Spanish missionaries were massacred after horrid tortures, and a similar fate was meted out to another

band of religious in 1647. Japan thus became a living tomb of the faithful. A price was put on the heads of all Christians, native or foreign, and every year the Japanese people collectively and individually were called upon to show their hatred of the Faith by trampling publicly on the crucifix ! Had this and the other edicts been strictly enforced, the remnant of the suffering Church must ere long have been entirely exterminated, but no doubt the system of feudalism, already referred to, which rendered the local lords semi-independent of the Mikado, and the consequent lax enforcement of the decree in many districts, enabled the spark of Christianity to keep alive. For two centuries, Japan remained cut off from the rest of the world, save for the intercourse kept up by a few merchants, chiefly Dutch, and so things continued till the treaty between France and Japan was signed in 1858. By this epoch-making agreement, it was stipulated, among other conditions, that Christianity should be permitted in the ports of the country. To the amazement of Père Petitjean of the Society of Foreign Missions and his colleagues, who now undertook the restoration of the faith in Japan, some fifty thousand native Christians were discovered in the country, and the marks by which this long unknown body of the faithful recognized their European brethren as members of the true Church were (a) the acknowledgment of the supremacy of "the Great Father" in Rome, or the Pope ; (2) Devotion to the Blessed Virgin ; and (3) Celibacy of the priesthood. A wonderful proof this of the traditional orthodoxy of the native Catholics who had been deprived of priest, sacrifice, sacraments (except Baptism) and official instruction for a period of nearly two and a half centuries !

The re-opening up of this ancient nation to Christian influences was received at Rome with unbounded joy, and in 1862, Pope Pius IX marked the beginning of the new and happier era by a great pontifical act designed both to remind the faithful at large of the marvellous constancy of these far-off children of the Church under such protracted trials, and to invoke the intercession of so many glorious martyrs and confessors.

The Canonization of twenty-six of the martyred saints of Japan, in June of that year, is, as the late Wilfred Ward so well described it, one of those events in Catholic history which startle the secular world !<sup>1</sup> The time chosen for the solemn act was one fraught with the gravest anxiety for the Holy See, owing to the dubious policy of Napoleon III and his government on the Roman question, the thinly veiled hostility of the Piedmontese government, and the active, if sporadic attacks of Garibaldi and his "Thousand," or rather, thousands of filibusters and revolutionaries. Yet it was in the midst of all these menacing contingencies that the great and genial Pontiff of the Italian Revolution chose to in-

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Cardinal Wiseman* vol. ii.

augurate an event of such interest and encouragement to the Universal Church. The celebration of the solemn Act brought crowds of the faithful, both illustrious and obscure, to Rome, including nearly three hundred bishops and over three thousand priests, the majority of these latter being French. At the semi-official Consistory on 22nd May, the Pope gave an allocution of characteristic fervour and even heartiness, in which he spoke of the constancy and devotion of the glorious martyrs about to be raised to the altars of the Church, and then with a reference to the sad condition of things ecclesiastical in Italy, His Holiness ended by requesting the prelates present to offer holy Mass for the Conversion of sinners. The Canonization celebrations on Sunday, 10th June, were marked by extraordinary scenes of splendour and spiritual enthusiasm. St Peter's, gorgeously decorated and lit up by hundreds of candelabra, presented a picture of Oriental magnificence, while numerous paintings set forth to the vast congregation, estimated at some sixty thousand, the saintly lives and heroic deaths of the blessed company now about to be added to the Calendar of the Church. The impressive ceremonial began at seven in the morning, and those present who remembered the *minutiæ* of Church history, remarked that the bishops there assembled—near three hundred in number<sup>1</sup> surpassed the episcopal attendance at the Fifth Council of the Lateran, and came not far short of that of Trent! Pius IX sang the Mass, filling with his rich and resonant voice those vast recesses and time-honoured spaces, that during the long centuries of the past had witnessed so many stirring or consoling episodes in the history of the Church. During the progress of the festivities connected with the Canonization, the holy Father gave audiences to thousands of pilgrims, and blessed almost innumerable objects of piety, while the bishops present were made free of the City by the Senate, and each had presented to him a beautifully chased medal and handsomely bound book, as souvenirs of this epoch-marking event.

The holy persons classed together as "the Japanese Martyrs" include the following :—

JESUITS.—*Fr. John Baptist Machado, martyred* at Omura, 22nd May, 1617; *Fr. Didacus Diego, m.* at Sendai, 22nd February, 1624; *Fr. Michael Cavalho, b.* 1577, *m.* at Omura, 25th August, 1624; *Fr. Paul Navarro, b.* 1562, *m.* at Semabura, 1st

<sup>1</sup> "There were, it appears, 265 bishops; at the Council of Trent there were 300; but none were there from America or Australia or Africa, and we had some from all these territories. His Holiness was quite well when we saw him on the fourteenth, a fortnight to-morrow. He spoke of England as the most precious stone in the Church's diadem." (Letter of Bishop Grant to Mr Thomas Arnold, 27th June, 1862.)—*Life of Bishop Grant*, by Grace Ramsay. (Smith, Elder & Co., 1874.)

November, 1622 ; Denis Fugixima, *native scholastic*, *b.* Japan, 1593, *m.* at Semabura, 1st November, 1622 ; Peter Onizuki, *native scholastic*, *b.* Japan, 1604, *m.* Semabura, 1st November, 1622 ; Leonard Kemura, *coadjutor*, *b.* at Nagasaki, 1575, *m.* there, 18th November, 1619 ; Francis Pachéco, *b.* in Portugal, 1565, *m.* at Nagasaki, 20th June, 1626 ; Baltassar de Torres, *b.* at Grenada (Spain), 1563, *m.* at Nagasaki, 20th June, 1626 ; Jean Baptist Zola, *b.* at Brescia (Italy), 1575, *m.* at Nagasaki, 20th June, 1626 ; Vincent Caun, *scholastic*, *b.* in Corea, 1580, *m.* at Nagasaki, 20th June, 1626 ; John Kinsaco, *b.* 1605, at Nagasaki, *m.* there, 20th June, 1626 ; Peter Rinxei, *scholastic*, *b.* in Japan, 1588, *m.* Nagasaki, 20th June, 1626 ; Michael Tozo, *native scholastic*, *b.* 1588, *m.* at Nagasaki, 20th June, 1626 ; Paul Xinsuki, *native scholastic*, *b.* 1572, at Nagasaki, *m.* there, 20th June, 1626 ; Gaspar San da Matzu, *native coadjutor*, *b.* at Omura, 1565, *m.* at Nagasaki, 20th June, 1626 ; Anthony Ixida, *b.* at Arima, Japan, 1570, *m.* Nagasaki, 20th June, 1626 ; Thomas Tsugi, *b.* Japan, 1571, *m.* at Nagasaki, 20th June, 1626 ; Michael Nacaxmia, *native scholastic*, *b.* 1583, *m.* at Semonoseki (or Mt. Ungen), 25th December, 1628 ; Charles Spinola, *b.* at Gênes (Prague ?), 1564, *m.* Nagasaki, 10th September, 1622 ; Sebastian Kemura, *b.* at Firando (Japan), 1565, *m.* Nagasaki, 10th September, 1622 ; Thomas Acafoxi, *native scholastic*, *b.* 1572, *m.* Nagasaki, 10th September, 1622 ; Louis Cavara, *b.* at Arima (Japan), 1582, *m.* Nagasaki, 10th September, 1622 ; John Ciongocou (or Tchoungocou), *native scholastic*, *b.* 1582, *m.* Nagasaki, 10th September, 1622 ; Gonsales Fusai, *native scholastic*, *b.* 1582, *m.* Nagasaki, 10th September, 1622 ; Anthony Kiuni, *native scholastic*, *b.* 1572, *m.* Nagasaki, 10th September, 1622 ; Michael Xumpo, *native scholastic*, *m.* Nagasaki, 10th September, 1622 ; Ambrose Fernandez, *Portuguese coadjutor*, *m.* at Suzuta, near Omura, 7th January, 1620 ; Camillus Constanzo, *b.* in Italy, 1570, *m.* at Firando, 15th September, 1622 ; Augustine Ota, *native scholastic*, *b.* 1572, *m.* at Firando, 10th August, 1622 ; Jerome de Angelis, *Sicilian*, *m.* at Yeddo, 4th December, 1623 ; Simon Jempo (or Yempo), *native scholastic*, *b.* 1575, *m.* at Yeddo, 4th December, 1623.

[F. Rouvier, S.J. : *Les Saints, Confesseurs et Martyres de la Compagnie de Jesus*. (Lille, 1893.)]

DOMINICAN M.M.—Giordano Ansaloni (or di San Stefano), tortured

to death in Japan, 17th November, 1634 ; Thomas, or St Hyacinth, 17th November, 1634 ; and over sixty other persons.

FRANCISCANS.—St Peter Baptist, St Martin of the Ascension, Francis Blanco, *priests* ; St Philip of Jesus, *cleric* ; Gonsalvo Garzia, Francis of St Michael, *lay brothers* ; and seventeen Japanese tertiaries. The beatification of the Japanese martyrs to his time was decreed by Urban VIII, and celebrated, 14th September, 1627, so that almost two hundred and thirty-five years intervened between the two last stages of this memorable canonical process.

N.B.—Though there was an outburst of hostility in Japan against the native Christians the very year the martyrs of their country were canonized (1862), and Bishop Grant,<sup>1</sup> and no doubt some others, anticipated a probable renewal of something like the persecuting experiences of the seventeenth century, the menace happily passed away after the worst phase, that of 1867, when some forty thousand of the Japanese faithful were deported to various parts of the Empire. Since 1873, religious toleration has reigned in Japan, and the progress of Catholicism has been very encouraging. The two Vicariates, into which the country was divided by Pius IX in 1876, have become a regular Episcopate (since June, 1896), when an Archbishop and three Suffragans were appointed by Leo XIII. The first native Bishop, Monsignor Hyasaka, was consecrated to the See of Nagasaki by Pope Pius XI at St Peter's, Sunday, 31st October, 1926. At present (1927), the Japanese Government contemplates the appointment of an embassy to the Holy See, while the attitude of the authorities to Catholics and their activities, religious and secular, is not only respectful, but even cordial. Japanese persons of influence are even co-operating in the erection of memorials to some of the martyred missionaries of the past, notably in the case of Fr. Sotelo, who gave his life *pro fide* at Sendai (seventeenth century). During his recent visit to Europe, the present Emperor, at his own special request, had a private audience with the Holy Father, by whom he was received with the full honours accorded to sovereign princes. The flourishing colleges, convents, and other institutions of learning and utility under the various religious orders in Japan, are largely attended by the families of the nobility and influential classes. So much for the bright side of the picture. It is frankly admitted, however, that the progress of the Faith has not kept pace with the growth of population, owing to lack of native priests and catechists, and the changed outlook of the people on foreigners, especially since the Russo-Japanese War. The defeat of a mighty power, so largely regarded as European,

<sup>1</sup> Letter.



has caused the Japanese to look down on Western peoples and all that pertains to them, while the national cult of "sacred patriotism," involving as it does the worship of the Emperor—the modern equivalent of the "Divus Imperator" of the ancient Romans—and of the souls of the departed heroes of the nation, has further intensified the feeling, and caused, moreover, a new and powerful revival of the ancient Shinto religion. Joined to all this are the strong Buddhist sentiments of the country people and the lax morality which—last unhappy trait—materialistic and even atheistic ideas from the godless universities of Europe and America, tend powerfully to foster. The confusion caused by the multifarious contradictions of Protestantism is another factor making for difficulty of conversion, but despite the somewhat forbidding prospect, signs are not wanting to show that Japan's spiritual future gives ground for hope. Through the multiplication of native priests, schools, and missionary organizations generally—including, of course, a vast increase of the power of the already widely diffused Catholic press—it is believed that a powerful barrier will be erected against the disintegrating forces before mentioned, and the Faith—already watered by the blood of so many martyrs—assured of a fair field even if there be no favour!

[Leon Page : *History of the Christian Religion in Japan*, Paris, 1870.  
Charles Sommervogel : *Bibliothèque de la Compagnie de Jesus*. Alzog : *Church History*, vol. iii. F. Rouvier, S.J. : *Le Saints . . . de la Compagnie de Jesus* (Lille, 1893). *The Messenger of the Sacred Heart*, August, 1926. *The Universe*, various numbers, 1927.]

FEBRUARY 5

ST PHILIP OF JESUS, O.S.F., MARTYR,  
PATRON OF MEXICO CITY  
(?—1597)

HE was born in Mexico, probably about the middle of the sixteenth century, and is said to have shown in his boyhood no sign of a religious vocation, being frivolous and addicted to amusement. He, nevertheless, joined the Franciscans, but left them in 1589, to go to the Philippine Islands, where he is reported to have devoted himself to mundane pleasures, though to what extent does not appear. But a call to a devout and holy life seems to have quickly followed this indulgence in the wholly unsatisfying gratifications of the world, and next year Philip again rejoined the Seraphic Order at Manila. While on the voyage to Mexico City, to

be ordained priest, in 1596, the *San Felipe*, the vessel which carried Brother Philip and his companions, was wrecked off Japan, and the crew on reaching shore was carried before the governor of the province. It has been stated that it was the discovery of a cannon and some ammunition on board which first aroused the suspicions of the natives, but this does not appear to have been the case. All merchantmen then, and for long after, carried guns, both as defence against pirates, etc., and for firing signals. The fact is, it was the folly of the captain and some of the crew who boasted of the power of the King of Spain and what he could do—or intended to do—against the country, that brought about the whole trouble. The entire ship's company, including about a dozen Franciscans and Jesuit clerics, were thrust into prison, and after some months conducted to Nagasaki, where the ecclesiastical section alone, apparently, was called upon to abjure the Christian faith. Upon a general refusal, they were all sentenced to death, and the sentence being confirmed by the Emperor Taico Sama (or Hideoshi), the martyrs were led up a mountain-side near the city and there crucified in Japanese fashion, by being first bound to crosses, and then transfixed with lances. St Philip and the rest of the sufferers, his companions, were beatified by Urban VIII, 14th September, 1627, and canonized by Pius IX, 10th June, 1862.

[See Martyrs of Japan (preceding article). Grace Ramsay : *Life of Thomas Grant, First Bishop of Southwark*. (Smith, Elder & Co., 1874.).]

## FEBRUARY 6

### THE BLESSED JAMES SALES AND BROTHER WILLIAM SAULTEMOUCHE, S.J., MARTYRS

(?—1593)

IN a note to Vol. iii of his valuable *Church History* (p. 573), Alzog informs us that the origin of the name "Huguenot" is not, as is commonly supposed, from *Eidgnossen*, or banded together by oath, but from *Hugonot*, an old French word, meaning "Night-ghost," an allusion, of course, to the nocturnal assemblies of the first followers of the Reformation in France. Whatever may be the derivation of the name, there is no doubt that from the establishment of the initial Protestant congregation at Meaux, in or about 1520, by William Farel—whom even the easy-going and tolerant Erasmus, called "the most shameless and abusive man he had ever met!"—the whole policy of the Huguenots was one of implacable hostility to the dominant religion of the French people. Not only was the Mass publicly blasphemed, but sacred

memorials, such as the crucifix, and statues of the Blessed Virgin and the Saints, were everywhere destroyed or defaced ! To such a length did these continued wanton outrages go, that the Government was *finally* forced to take action, and issue the first of those repressive edicts which were really necessary if the material fabric of the Church of Charlemagne and St Louis was not to perish with its doctrine ! These severe measures are all the more remarkable, as at that time the spirit of the ruling powers in France was anything but intolerant. In the first place, the King, Francis I, was the sworn ally of the Lutheran princes of Germany in their antagonism to his great rival, Charles V. Then the Sorbonne, too, was not only the guardian of the "Gallican Liberties," but was also liberal and Erastian in a way that certainly did not encourage an overmastering zeal for traditional orthodoxy ! Moreover, there was in society a sort of fashion for maintaining crotchets and freak notions in religion, which greatly facilitated a general easy acquiescence in all manner of doctrinal novelties. Lastly, a number of influential persons, such as the King's mistress, the Duchesse d'Estampes, his sister, Margaret, later Queen of Navarre, and Jean de Belloy, Bishop of Paris—this latter subsequently a Cardinal of the mundane Richelieu-Mazarin type—patronized for personal or political purposes, the supporters of the Reformation in France. Conditions being thus favourable to their cause, ordinary prudence on the part of the French Calvinists would, in all probability, have secured for them a practical toleration, but as we have remarked, they sought not freedom of worship, but liberty to impose by force the gloom of Geneva on the rest of their countrymen, and hence the almost half century of bloodshed and anarchy which cost the nation millions of lives and the destruction of tens of thousands of buildings, sacred and profane !<sup>1</sup> It is no part of this account to follow, even in outline, the horrifying wars of religion in France. But there, as elsewhere during this period of spiritual and social upheaval, it was "the Mass that mattered," and it is with two of the martyrs of the Blessed Sacrament at Aubenas that the present narrative is chiefly concerned, the previous remarks on the general causes that led up to this, as to countless other tragic occurrences in France, during this period, being merely introductory and explanatory.

The first of these two sufferers for the doctrine of the Real Presence, was Père James Sales, priest of the Society of Jesus. Born in 1556, the year of the death of St Ignatius, he entered the Noviciate of the Society in 1573,

<sup>1</sup> It has been estimated that the Huguenots destroyed some twenty thousand churches, monasteries, and other public monuments, including the tombs of William The Conqueror, and the rest of the Dukes of Normandy at Rouen (1562). In Dauphiné alone, they burnt down 900 villages and killed 378 priests and religious in the course of a single rebellion. One of their leaders, Brigueumont, was accustomed to ride with the ears of slaughtered clergy dangling from his bridle and even neck !

and after the usual long and thorough course of preparation, was ordained priest and subsequently appointed to lecture on divinity in Paris. He was remarkable, apart from other traits of piety, for a great devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, and for a force of will which, under God, enabled him to obtain a complete mastery over a hasty and occasionally very violent temper. At the Jesuit College of Clermont (Paris), where he was Professor, he was also known for a happy and genial disposition, though at one period of his life he had suffered much from the gloom and depression, common enough at all times among certain spiritual people, but especially so at that epoch, when the devastating Civil War was raging all over the country, and the Catholic League was doing battle for the very existence of the Church in France. It is said that Fr. Salès always had a presentiment that one day he would die for the Faith. He had a great devotion to the martyrs who lost their lives in the contemporary persecution in England, and always cherished a relic of the Blessed Edmund Campion. Not only did Père Salès lecture and pray, but he also wrote many controversial tractates defending the various articles of belief against the attacks of the Calvinist innovators. He likewise preached many missions, and notwithstanding the great difficulties which beset these public exercises, owing to the turmoil of the times, they were generally well attended, and resulted in numerous conversions, both of lax Catholics to a better life, and of Calvinists to the Church.

When Père Salès was a boy and attending the College of Billom, there was a servant of the house named William Saultemouche, who, like the pupil, entered later on, the Society of Jesus. His position of lay-brother caused him to be employed as hall-porter in various colleges and houses of the Order, and he soon was recognized as a simple, pious soul, with all a saint's genius for putting up with the troubles and rebuffs of life. Like St Bernard and his "Ad quid venisti," Brother Saultemouche invented a pious ejaculation to keep himself restrained and collected, when some unusually bad case of annoyance arose, and it consisted of the words: "Endure, flesh, endure!"—a sort of brief summary of the Gospel adage: "But he who shall persevere to the end, he shall be saved" (*St Matt.* xxiv. 13).

In December, 1592, Père Salès and Brother Saultemouche came to Aubenas for the Lenten retreat or mission there and in the neighbouring villages. The sermons of Fr. Salès aroused much local interest, and in pursuance of a not very wise custom, but one which survived till well into the fourth decade of the nineteenth century, a public disputation was arranged to take place between the Jesuit preacher and the Calvinist minister of the district, M. Pierre Labat. On the day appointed for this doctrinal contest, the latter did not appear, much to the confusion of his

friends and followers, and it was resolved that the priest must be got rid of at all costs, if the cause of *la reforme* was to have any chance in the place. The town of Aubenas it may be remarked, had long been held by the Huguenots, but had been captured by the Leaguers six years before (1587). The incident just referred to greatly exasperated the former dominant faction, and things looked so ominous, that Fr. Salès assured the Catholic governor of the town that the place would certainly be attacked, unless means were taken to defend it. No heed was taken of the warning, and on the night of 5th February, 1593, the inhabitants were startled from their sleep by the entrance of troops. Though the terrible Civil War was all but over, and Henry of Navarre, as Henri Quatre, was on the eve of declaring himself a Catholic, the general condition of France at that time was more or less that of an armed truce. Both sides still faced each other in hostile array, and now some of the Huguenot troops were in possession of Aubenas, their object being the arrest, and as it was to prove, the death of Père Salès and his lay-brother assistant. The two at once hastened to the Church, where their first work was to consume as quickly and as reverently as possible, the consecrated host and communion particles to save them from profanation. In a short time the invaders entered the building, and after demanding from Père Salès an article which, as a religious, he did not possess, *i.e.* his purse, pulled him and the lay-brother roughly out of the Church to a house at the far end of the town, where they found the Calvinist minister, M. Labat, who at once began a heated discussion with the captives on the subject of the holy Eucharist. After a while, the minister became very abusive, ending by calling upon Sarjas, the captain of the soldiers, to drag the two Jesuits into the street, a request which was at once carried out. Years before, Père Salès used often to say: "I have been thinking of martyrdom, and I long to give my life for God." His prayer was now about to be granted, and Brother Saultemouche, too, was to be joined in the sacrifice. Both in that supreme moment calmly faced the angry crowd of sectaries and soldiers that filled the street, and gazing in the direction of the neighbouring parish Church, the patron of which, St James, they each invoked, together with the holy names of Jesus and Mary, awaited the end. Several musket-shots and a multitude of sword and poniard thrusts consummated the sacrifice. Not for two years could the bodies of these heroic witnesses be recovered for burial, but, meantime, many favours and petitions had, it was piously believed, been granted through their intercession. Their beatification was decreed in 1926, by the present Pope, Pius XI, and now the names of the Blessed James Salès and the Blessed William Saultemouche take their place with those of our own country who, about the same time, likewise died for the sake of

that same great dogma which is rightly known as the "Mystery of Faith."

[See *Messenger of the Sacred Heart*, August, 1926. Alzog: *Church History*, vol. iii.]

FEBRUARY 7

## SHERWOOD, THE BLESSED THOMAS, MARTYR (1551-1578)

OWING to various mistakes in some of the contemporary and later accounts, several erroneous details have been handed down concerning this interesting personage, whose life and death are among the most edifying of the biographies of the English martyrs. The father of the Blessed Thomas Sherwood was a native of Nottingham, and for a time a student of New College, Oxford, but being unable to graduate by reason of the recently introduced oath of Supremacy, left the University and took to trade, his business being that of a woollen draper in London. He married Elizabeth Tregian, sister of Mr Francis Tregian of Volveden, Cornwall, in whose house the Blessed Cuthbert Maine was arrested in June 1577. Thomas was one of the fourteen children born to this pious pair. He left school at the age of fifteen, after which he helped his father in his business, but owing to the ever-increasing penal statutes under Elizabeth, the family found it necessary to leave London and live first at Nottingham, the paternal birthplace, and then in Dorsetshire, where one of the sons was already married and settled. Most of the family subsequently returned to London, where they lived in great retirement. It must have been this period that Fr. Parsons refers to in the account he gives of the future martyr's austerities, describing how he lived in solitary places, wearing a hair-shirt, and sleeping on a board!

While in Dorsetshire, the Sherwoods seem to have become acquainted with Lady Tregonwell, relict of Sir John Tregonwell.<sup>1</sup> That gentleman had been one of Henry VIII's Commissioners for the disposal of the Abbey property, and as part of his reward received the estates of Milton or Middleton Abbey, a Benedictine House, founded as far back as 933 by King Athelstane. Sir John died 13th January, 1565, and apparently a Catholic, judging by the last part of the inscription on his tomb, asking for prayers for his soul. Whether this were so or not, his widow certainly was a Catholic, and it was in the secret chapel of her house that Thomas Sherwood, and, no doubt, the other members of his family as well, used

<sup>1</sup> Pronounced, and sometimes spelt in contemporary documents, Tregonnell.

occasionally to hear Mass while in Dorsetshire. The lady had also a house in or near London, and after their return to town the Sherwoods apparently got Holy Mass and Sacraments there from time to time. Devout and courageous Catholic as Lady Tregonwell was, it was far otherwise with her son, George Martin. This "Young Spark," as Bishop Challoner quaintly terms him, was a hot gospeller, and he seems to have owed a grudge for some reason or other against Thomas Sherwood, and before very long had an excellent opportunity of paying off the score. Thomas Sherwood, believing himself called to the priesthood, subsequently went to Douay, but although declared by Challoner to have been entered on the list of students for 1576, this seems not to have been the case. He conferred with some of the Fathers of the College, and as he was encouraged by them "to fall again to study," it may have been that he was not deemed sufficiently advanced in his "Humanities" to be able to commence Philosophy. Family affairs, too, seem to have entered into this obscure phase of the martyr's history, but whatever was the reason, he returned to London, and this was the cause of his earthly undoing. For while walking down Chancery Lane one day, he fell in with the above-mentioned George Tregonwell, who called him "a traitor!" and other opprobrious names, which caused a crowd to assemble, and the luckless young man was taken into custody. He was at once haled before the Recorder of London, Sir William Fleetwood, a great enemy of the "papists," who, according to Challoner, examined him strictly on "the Queen's Churchheadship and the Pope's Supremacy." Fr. Parsons narrates that the prisoner was also questioned about the Bull of Pius V, *Regnans in Excelsis*, and whether the excommunication rendered Elizabeth Queen or not? Sherwood replied that, in view of the Bull, he thought she could not be his lawful queen. The case of the accused illustrates yet again one of the great hardships inflicted on the Catholics of this land by the painful, embarrassing, and as it proved, almost futile, excommunication of the Queen. No swords had been drawn to support that measure, the chief effect of which was to divide the Catholics, cause them to be stigmatized as traitors, and to put them at the mercy of the Government of the day. So embarrassing was this unfortunate document, that it was forbidden to be discussed at Douay, even in private, and both professors and students were ordered to give Elizabeth her title of Queen, notwithstanding the pontifical sentence, and the *de jure* claims of the imprisoned Mary of Scots.<sup>1</sup> The authorities of the English College distinguished between the strictly spiritual authority of the

<sup>1</sup> Milner: *Letters to a Prebendary*: That the authorities in Rome soon recognized the mistake in issuing the Bull was clearly shown in 1583, when Gregory XIII, the successor of Pius V, allowed the Catholics to recognize Elizabeth as *de facto* Queen. The Queen of Scots, of course, was the *de jure* heir.

Successor of St Peter, and powers, which, however useful and effective in the centuries past, were now not only useless but harmful !

After being confined in the Gatehouse at Westminster, Mr Sherwood was thrust into a dark and filthy dungeon in the Tower, a frightful place, infested with ferocious rats ! This alone must have been a horrible torture, being, in fact, a revival of a method employed sometimes to harass and even destroy Christian prisoners during the persecutions under the pagan Roman Empire.<sup>1</sup> But the Blessed Thomas had soon worse torments to endure than even the presence and bites of Thames rats ! He was several times racked—being, it is said, the first so tortured, “for mere matter of faith in our memories”—and racked, too, with such severity that even the hard-hearted Fleetwood,<sup>2</sup> who was present at one of these inflictions, is said to have wept !

Torture, of course, was then and for long afterwards, common all over Europe, but its employment in this country was, even at that time, considered alien to the spirit of the law, in spite of Lord Burleigh’s published *Justification* in defence of the barbarous practice. It was frequently employed in the case of priests to force them to say where they had said Mass, or otherwise officiated. But its use in Sherwood’s instance rather goes to prove that he had, as stated, expressed his belief in the justice of the late Bull of Excommunication, and that the authorities were trying to wring from him the names of other persons who had manifested approval of the pontifical act. If this were so, the torture completely failed to draw any accusations or incriminating acknowledgments from the prisoner, who under all these horrible inflictions displayed the fortitude of the greatest among the heroes of the Faith.<sup>3</sup>

So vile was the prison treatment of this heroic young man, that he must have died of sheer ill-usage had not the sentence of the law put a

<sup>1</sup> Rev. H. Formby: *The Little Book of the Martyrs of the City of Rome.* London, 1877.

<sup>2</sup> William Fleetwood, the Recorder, as will have been gathered from the above and previous remarks, was “famous for rigorously enforcing the laws against vagrants, mass-priests and papists !” He, however, got into serious trouble on one occasion in 1576, for breaking into the Portuguese Ambassador’s house in pursuit of a “popish recusant,” Ambassadors’ premises being, of course, extra-territorial and privileged. He died, 28th February, 1594, a disappointed man, for not having obtained higher judicial preferment.

<sup>3</sup> The practice of inflicting torture became generally so hateful to the people of this country that the Government ordered Topcliffe and the other priest-hunters to use it privately on their victims ! This dislike of barbarity is quite in keeping with the usually humane conduct of the nation at large, except during the fierce controversial period called into being by the “Reformation,” and later during the “No Popery” frenzy stirred up by Oates, Tonge, and the other perjurers, 1678-81. Torture was declared illegal by the judges in Felton’s case, 1628, though the *Peine Forte et Dure*, or pressing to death in the case of indicted felons who refused to plead, was not legally abolished till 1771. It had not been used, however, since 1741. Torture was not finally abolished in France till 1788 (Louis XVI) the year before the Revolution.



period to his sufferings. Mr Roper, son-in-law of Sir Thomas More, tried to relieve the captive's immediate pressing wants, but the charitable intervention of this gentleman was frustrated by the cruelty of the Lieutenant of the Tower, who would not permit the prisoner "to have the benefit of any such alms." At length, on 1st February, 1578, Mr Sherwood was indicted in the Court of Queen's Bench, for asserting that our said Queen Elizabeth is "a schismatic and an heretic," and that "Pope Gregory, the Thirteenth that now is," is "God's General Vicar on earth." The martyrdom which followed the sentence of death on the 3rd, took place at Tyburn on Friday 7th February, the sufferer then being as reputed about twenty-seven years of age.

The Blessed Thomas Sherwood, as already mentioned, was one of those wonderful characters who, like the Blessed Thomas More, have led lives of extraordinary holiness and mortification, which even apart from their glorious deaths for the Faith, might have ensured for them the honours of canonization. While confined in his dreadful dungeon and tormented in body by his frequent and merciless rackings, the holy captive was often heard to repeat this prayer: "Lord Jesus, I am not worthy that I should suffer these things for Thee! Much less am I worthy of those rewards which Thou hast promised to give to such as confess Thee."

As in the case of many other persons who have suffered for the Catholic faith, the Blessed Thomas Sherwood is reported to have enjoyed great and supernatural consolations even to the extent of having the pains of his repeated rackings miraculously cured! For though his body was fearfully distorted, yet within three days, so runs the account, he was seen to walk about "in health as if he had suffered nothing!" When the condemned was on the way to martyrdom at Tyburn, a mysterious flame was declared to have been seen over his parents' house, just as the procession passed by. Some other curious particulars relating to the martyr are set forth in Fr. Parsons' *Domesticall Difficulties*, which throw much light on the "Troubles of our Catholic Forefathers" during this period of stress and trial.

[There is an excellent notice of the Blessed Thomas Sherwood in the Rev. Dom R. Bede Camm's *Lives of the English Martyrs*, a work to which the present writer is much indebted. See also Challoner: *Lives*.]

FEBRUARY 10

ST SCHOLASTICA, VIRGIN

( ?-1543)

[For Life of this Saint, see Butler's *Lives of the Fathers, Martyrs, and other Saints*, vol. i.]

FEBRUARY 11

THE SEVEN FOUNDERS OF THE SERVITE ORDER

(1233-1310)

THE great impetus to the pursuit of holy poverty given by St Francis of Assisi, and the Friars Minor in the early decades of the thirteenth century, led in Italy especially, to the growth of much asceticism, and the desire of perfection through a life of retirement and mortification. In 1233 there were in Florence seven merchants of patrician rank, named respectively Buon figlio de Monaldi, Giovanni di Buonaguinta, Bartolomeo degli Amidei, Ricovera dei Lippi-Ugguccioni, Benedetto dell' Antella, Gherardino di Sostegno and Alessio di Falconieri. They were accustomed to meet together to sing the praises of Our Lady, and on the Feast of the Assumption, 1233, while engaged in this pious exercise, it is said that the Blessed Virgin appeared to them, and bade them devote themselves entirely to the spiritual life. They formed themselves into a brotherhood, and for greater seclusion retired to Monte Senario, a wild and lonely spur of the Apennines. The fraternity left Florence in the order of a procession, carrying the Cross and an image of Our Lady. A small rustic oratory was erected on the Mount at once, but until the permanent monastery was built, the little community led an austere life in the caves and holes of the neighbouring rocks. It was near this eremitical abode that occurred the rapid and marvellous growth of a vine planted by the brethren—a growth which was taken to prognosticate the future and wonderful expansion of the Order, and the dissemination of its spiritual fruits among men. It was at Monte Senario, so it is alleged, that the vision of Our Lady was repeated, during which they were ordered to follow the rule of St Augustine, wear a black habit and girdle, and live under the three usual vows. Ten years later, St Peter Martyr, Inquisitor-General of Italy, brought the new Society to the favourable notice of the Pope, but no official approval was given by the Holy See till 13th March, 1249. In 1251, Innocent IV made Cardinal Guglielmo Fieschi first Protector of the Order. The name "Servites, or Religious Servants of the Holy



## SAINT SCHOLASTICA

*To face page 48*

Scholastica's brother was the great St. Benedict. Scholastica herself became a nun, founding a nunnery near to his monastery at Monte Cassino. Once only in the year did the two meet, and Scholastica, who loved her brother devotedly, on one occasion begged God to prolong the meeting. A sudden thunderstorm prevented Benedict from leaving, and so the two spent the whole night talking about holy things, much to Scholastica's joy.

Virgin" is said to have arisen from the following occurrence. Some members of the Order were begging their bread one day in the streets of Florence (?), when suddenly some infants in their mothers' arms cried out, to the amazement of the bystanders: "See the Servants of the Virgin!" or, as another version relates it: "See the Servants of Mary!" One of the children who spoke out in this marvellous manner was Philip Benizi, who later became General of the Order and one of the chief of its Saints.<sup>1</sup>

The great trial of the Order came in 1276, when Innocent V meditated suppressing it in accordance with the Resolution of the Council of Lyons against the multiplication of religious orders. But the danger passed away, and, after more than two centuries of continued progress, Innocent VIII, by the Constitution *Mare Magnum* (1487), not only confirmed all former grants and privileges, but also bestowed on the Servites the same prerogatives enjoyed by the great mendicant and preaching orders. When the last of the "Seven Founders," St Alexis Falconieri died, 1310, the brethren already numbered over 10,000, chiefly in Italy and Germany. There were no houses of the foundation in England at the time of the Great Pillage, 1536-39, but at present there are three houses of men in this country, one in the Fulham Road, London, S.W., Our Lady of Dolours (1867); the Priory at Bognor, commenced in a temporary chapel, 1880, and transferred to the new church-residence, opened 16th August, 1882. The third house, St Wilfred's Priory and School, is at Todmorden, Lancashire. The number of Servite Convents in England amounts to about twelve.

The object of the Servite Order may be described as twofold. The first and temporary one was the pacification of Italy, torn by the factions of Guelph and Ghibelline, and the local feuds of the great Italian families which followed the lead of either of these parties. The second and permanent intention, after the sanctification of its own members, was the spiritual betterment of populations and communities, schools and universities. This is effected in the ordinary way by parochial ministration, or by missions and retreats. The principal devotion is to the Dolours of the Blessed Virgin and the Passion of Our Lord—those dual exercises of piety that have led so many to repentance and so many to perfection! The Seven Holy Founders were beatified in 1752 by the most learned of the Popes, Benedict XIV, and solemnly canonized in 1888 by Leo XIII, the great Pontiff, part of whose mission it apparently

<sup>1</sup> Similar stories of prophetic voices are narrated even in connection with pagan history, as, for instance, the famous case of the child who cried "Triumph!" on one occasion when the Roman populace was greatly dejected by the early reverses of the Second Punic War. But the Romans were a "Chosen People"—a nation raised up to mould the civil and religious destinies of the world and the infantine prediction in question, if uttered, may well have been the audible expression of the will of Providence.

was to disseminate in a world gone astray the true principles of Catholic philosophy. Among the other members of the Order publicly honoured by the Church must be reckoned St Philip Benizi (Feast, 23rd August), St Peregrine Tatiosi (30th April), and St Juliana Falconieri (19th June). At the other end of the scale may be mentioned the noted or notorious Fr. Pietro Sarpi, better known from his professed name as Fra Paolo (1552-1623). Most of his life was spent at Venice as Provincial of the Servites, which office he first received in 1575. The "Theologian of the Republic," as Sarpi came to be styled, strenuously defended the Government of the Doge in its quarrel with Paul V, 1606, and as in most Church and State disputes, certainly in this one, the secular party had, in one respect, much right to maintain. This was on the subject of criminal clerks and their amenability to the civil power. Considering the social condition of Venice and of Italian cities generally at that time, owing to great moral relaxation, the numbers of merely nominal ecclesiastics, and the prevalence of duelling, assassination and other scandals, few will be disposed to deny that the contemporary *privilegium fori* stood in need of considerable revision. Sarpi's *History of the Council of Trent* is, however, so anti-papal and anti-catholic generally, that many writers are of opinion that the author had at heart the establishment of some kind of Protestantism at Venice! The book has been criticized by many non-Catholic authorities including von Ranke, who, nevertheless, considers the author as the greatest Italian historian after Machiavelli—a judgment which, of course, may be taken in more senses than one.

[*Histoire des Sept Saints Fondateurs*, Paris, 1888; *Historical Sketch*, published by the Catholic Truth Society.]

FEBRUARY 11

SOUBIROUS, ST BERNADETTE

(SCEUR MARIE BERNARD)

(1844-1879)

LOURDES, which is now probably a household name all over the civilized world, was a somewhat obscure country town of France near the Pyrenees, down to the middle of the last century, though the place was not without its history. Roman and Saracenic remains proclaimed its antiquity and importance, and during the horrifying wars of religion in France, Leaguers and Huguenots had more than once contended fiercely for its possession. The natural beauty of the surroundings, too, made it a favourite resort for tourists and "trippers," brought hither in the char-à-bancs, that very

practical French vehicle of the Thirties, which Louis Philippe made known in this country when he gave a fine specimen to Queen Victoria as a souvenir of his visit in 1844. Among the six thousand inhabitants of Lourdes that same year, was a miller and his family, named Soubirous. François Soubirous had received the mill as part of the "dot" of his wife, Louise Casterot, but bad management—a very rare fault in France!—soon brought the business to ruin, and husband, wife and little ones had to leave the commodious mill-house and make their abode in a building in the Rue des Petits-fossés, once used as the local prison, and still at that time generally known as "the lock-up" (*le cachot*!). Bernadette, the eldest child of the marriage of this ill-starred pair, was born 7th January, 1844, and baptized the next day, receiving the name of Marie Bernard, later abridged to Bernadette. She was not a strong child, for early in life, asthma and other troubles manifested themselves, but notwithstanding all this, she was very cheerful and lively. In fact, she cared for nothing or anybody as the saying is, and was entirely free from any kind of conceit or tendency to pose. It is very important to bear these facts in mind, as, of course, had it not been so, the future events which have made her history so wonderful would no doubt have been ascribed either to subtle artifice or to the "unnatural state of mind" of a sickly child given to dwelling on the preternatural! Towards the end of 1857, she went to live with a family at Bartrès, named Aravant, where she was employed in the healthy, if rather monotonous, occupation of a shepherdess. While there, she was instructed in the Catechism by the local Curé, an old man, who, it is said, wished to leave his parish to join the Benedictines. Bernadette was not happy at Bartrès. She yearned for her home in the "Cachot," and in January, 1858, she had her wish, going back to Lourdes, where she continued her preparation for her first Holy Communion. A few days after the little girl returned, she went with her little sister, Toinette, and a girl friend, named Jeanne Abardie, to gather sticks on the banks of the Gave. All of a sudden, Bernadette, while intent on this necessary but prosaic work, heard a noise like that of a gust of wind, and looking up saw in the grotto of the rock opposite, a lady dressed in white. The child was frightened, as she afterwards said. She tried to say her rosary, but could not make the sign of the Cross till after one or two attempts, when she succeeded. Then fear passed from her and the saying of the rosary went forward easily. Meantime she observed carefully the dress and appearance of "the Lady." It was white, with a veil covering head, shoulders and arms. The sash was blue and there were yellow roses on the feet. The figure was surrounded with light. On Sunday, 14th February, Bernadette again went to the grotto, accompanied by some of her girl friends. She had spoken of the supposed apparition to her

mother, who made light of it as a mere natural occurrence. On the fourteenth, the vision came again, and only with difficulty could Bernadette, who appeared "smiling and beautiful," be got away from the spot by some of the neighbours who had been called to the place by the children, who, alarmed at the long absence of their companion, had gone off to get help. From this time till 18th July, of the same year, some eighteen apparitions took place and then the manifestations ceased. Meantime, the reports of these extraordinary occurrences caused the greatest excitement in the district. The local priest, the Abbè Pomian, as well as the nuns of the Convent who had instructed Bernadette for her first Communion, were long quite incredulous. Some pious persons thought the "Petito Damizelo," as Bernadette, in the patois of the district—one bordering on the Pyrenees—always styled the figure of the apparitions, might be the soul of a girl friend of the child who had recently died, and of course, most people regarded the affair as "hallucination!" Not only that, but the general excitement was causing large crowds to assemble almost daily near the grotto, and under the Second Empire, the Government of Napoleon III did not favour these demonstrations. They were too often the prelude of those anti-dynastic and anti-law and order *émeutes*, which meant "barri-cades," and pitched battles with the military. The grotto was carefully searched by the police to discover any evidences of "trickery," and persons were forbidden to enter it. Bernadette herself was closely examined, both by the local Commissary and the Imperial Prosecutor, but her replies were always humble, straightforward and entirely free from the slightest trace of vanity or love of notoriety. The gist of these communications was that the vision she had seen in the grotto of the rock "Massabielle," was that of a young lady "lovelier than I have ever seen"; also that she, Bernadette, was bidden to drink of a mysterious fountain in the grotto, which, before unknown, began to gush forth from that time, and that she was to tell the clergy that a Chapel was to be built on the spot and processions made to the place. Bernadette frequently fell into ecstasy during these visions, but after one of them, she addressed the following question to the apparition, three times: "Madame, will you have the goodness to tell me who you are?" At the third request the Lady raised her eyes and said: "Que soi era Immaculado Concepcion"—I am the Immaculate Conception!

The temporary closing of the grotto, which was done by order of the Prefect of Tarbes, Baron Massey, was not in consequence of any really untoward incident, though there had been a certain amount of tumult now and then, and, of course, some claims to supernatural manifestations made by a few neurotic and excitable persons. The closing of the place was on the ground that the spring that had suddenly sprung up, was a

medicinal one, and, therefore, *ipso facto*, Government property. Upon analysis, however, the water was proved to have no special medicinal or chemical properties whatever, and by a decree of Napoleon III the place was again opened to the public—pious and the reverse.

On 17th November, 1858, Bernadette was again subjected to an inquiry, and this time before the Commission authorized by the Bishop of Tarbes, Mgr. Lawrence. Her replies, as usual, were perfectly honest and simple, and without any ulterior motive. After four years of due consideration of all the facts and circumstances of the cases, the Bishop of Tarbes officially declared that the alleged apparitions had all the "appearances of truth, and that the faithful were justified in believing in them."

From 1858 to 1860, Bernadette lived on with her family, but in the latter year the Curé of Lourdes and the Mayor, M. Lacade, considered it best for her to go and reside with the Sisters of Nevers, and so avoid the very undesirable public curiosity and attention her extraordinary experiences had evoked. At first, Bernadette simply lived in the Convent as a sort of boarder, but in 1864 she was accepted at her own urgent request, supported by the warm approval of the Bishop of the diocese, as a prospective postulant of the Convent of her retreat. Her bad state of health, however, delayed her reception two years, and it was not until 4th July, 1866, that she actually entered as a postulant at Nevers. Meanwhile, she had returned to her family at Lourdes, where she continued to follow as far as possible the rule of her future life in religion.

The Congregation of her choice—"The Sisters of Charity and Christian Instruction of Nevers"—had been founded in 1680 by Dom Jean Baptiste de Lavergne, O.S.B., for the care of the sick and the education of the young. The Rev. Mother, when Bernadette entered, was Mère Josephine Imbert, a religious of great holiness and prudence. She wisely caused the interesting novice to describe simply, but fully, to the community her experiences at the grotto, and then forbade the subject to be discussed again. During the thirteen years of her life as a Sister of the Convent, Sœur Marie Bernard, as Bernadette now was, practised the virtues of self-effacement and mortification to a wonderful extent. When once a new-comer to the Convent, who had expected to see in the famous Sister something "seraphic," but who saw nothing extraordinary, and who, in an outburst of disappointment, could not help exclaiming: "Just fancy! only *that*!" Sister Marie Bernard, who, like the St Curé d'Ars on a similar occasion, greatly enjoyed the whole incident, replied laughingly: "Yes, only *that*!" After eight years of devoted service in the infirmary attached to the Convent, Sister Marie Bernard, in view of her rapidly declining health, was given charge of the Sacristy. A favourite ejaculatory prayer with her was, 'My soul, rejoice that you resemble Jesus in re-



maining hidden in your weakness." During the winter of 1877, her old trouble, asthma, increased, and to this was now added spitting of blood and an abscess in the right knee. On 22nd September, 1878, she made her perpetual vows, and on the 28th March following, received the last Sacraments. She publicly asked pardon of the Community for any faults she might have committed, and on the Wednesday of Easter week, 16th April, 1879, calmly expired, while appropriately repeating the last part of the "Hail Mary."

Her body, which remained flexible four days after her death, was interred in the Chapel of St Joseph within the Mother House at Nevers. Her cause was introduced at Rome, 5th August, 1913, and on the 13th of the same month, the decree was ratified by the Pope (Pius X). The Ven. Sœur Marie Bernard was declared Blessed June 14, 1925. Ever since ecclesiastical sanction was given to the public demonstrations of devotion at Lourdes in 1862, the reputation of the place as a Sanctuary of Catholicism, has increased with phenomenal rapidity, till to-day, the Shrine is easily the most popular with the faithful as a place of pilgrimage. The fame of the humble peasant girl, Bernadette, has far eclipsed that of Bernadotte, who alone of all Napoleon's mighty Captains retained the throne that was the guerdon of his genius, and whose family is still the reigning house of Sweden.

In 1873, the great national French pilgrimages were commenced, and three years later the splendid basilica at Lourdes was completed, and the Statue of Our Lady therein solemnly blessed. The second Church, that at the foot of the former was commenced in 1883 and completed in 1901, as the Church of the Rosary. The Feast of Notre Dame de Lourdes, 11th February, was extended by Pius X to the whole Church (1907), and Lourdes itself is now a separate diocese. The pilgrims to the shrine probably exceed a million a year, while it has been officially recorded that about four thousand persons have been cured there of diseases regarded by medical science as "hopeless." A board of physicians, some of them not Catholics, or even believers, certify the cases as not likely to be cured by medical means before the fact is accepted, and no patient suffering from a mental or nervous disorder is entered in the recorded lists of persons believed to have been supernaturally restored to health as the result of a devotional pilgrimage to the world-famed grotto.<sup>1</sup>

[*Blessed Bernadette Soubirous*, by Abbé J. Blazy. Translated by the Right Rev. Mgr. Charles Payne, Vicar-General of Nottingham. With an Introduction by His Lordship the Bishop of Nottingham. (London: Burns Oates & Washbourne, Ltd., 1926).]

<sup>1</sup> The Blessed Bernadette was canonized by Pope Pius XI., Friday, 8th December, 1933, the feast of the Immaculate Conception, an act which fitly crowned a unique life of holiness and self-effacement, and signaled the final triumph of Lourdes.

FEBRUARY 12

HAYDOCK, THE VENERABLE GEORGE, PRIEST AND  
MARTYR

(1557-1584)

IN that veritable "Romance of the Recusants, the Haydock Papers," the late Mr Joseph Gillow has told us much concerning the Martyr George Haydock and his family, and it is to these learned, and often curious genealogical details that students of the subject are indebted for most of the personal facts set down in the following memoir. The Rev. George Haydock, born in or about 1557, was the youngest son of Evan or Vivian Haydock, Esquire, of Cottam Hall, near Preston, Lancashire. The first notable ancestor of the line appears to have been Hugo de Eydoc or Haidoc, who owned the manor of Cottam about the third decade of the thirteenth century. The name which is pronounced "Haddock" in Lancashire, is said to be derived from "Hedge of Oak," though the connection is not clear.

The wife of Vivian Haydock died shortly after giving birth to the subject of this notice, and on the very day apparently that brought the news of the death of Queen Mary, and the accession of her sister, Elizabeth.

As the Squire of Cottam stood by the bedside of his dying wife and mused over his impending loss and also the dark prospects of Catholic England, Mrs Haydock, divining his gloomy thoughts, pointed to the family motto : *Tristia vestra vertetur in gaudium*—"Your sorrow shall be turned into joy" (*St John* xvi. 20). It is supposed that his own call and that of two of his sons to the priesthood, was the fulfilment of this strange reminder of the personal meaning of the ancestral maxim.

Several years later, the Rev. William Allen, the Founder of Douay College, whose brother, George, had married Mrs Vivian Haydock's sister, visited his Lancashire relatives and friends, and among these the Squire of Cottam.<sup>1</sup> As the result of their frequent conversations about the Catholic religion and its extremely gloomy outlook in this country, Mr Haydock took the resolution of entering the priesthood at some future date, when his children should be grown up and capable of managing their own affairs. The years of waiting ended in 1573, and then the Squire of Cottam, having made over the family estates to his eldest son, William, left for Douay College, accompanied by his two sons, George, the subject of this sketch, and Richard, who after his ordination in 1577 went to Rome and became a doctor in divinity. The rise of the Reformation and still more the schism of this country from the Apostolic See, if they had caused the loss of countless persons to the Faith, had at least indirectly done one immense service to the Church. The controversies of the day had called forth a

<sup>1</sup> The Founder of Douay College did not become D.D. (University of Douay) till 1571.

shower, or deluge rather, of books and "broad sheets," dealing with all the points of the almost universal controversy, but especially such matters as the Pope's Supremacy, the Mass and the Power of Forgiving Sins. The Catholic laity of England of the more educated class, were, therefore, as a body, very well instructed in their religion, and it was this consideration joined to the fact that he was now passed middle life, which no doubt caused Mr Vivian Haydock to be promoted to the priesthood after but two years of further study. He left for England, 21st November, 1575, where he filled the post of agent or "gatherer" for Douay College in London. He was much troubled by the priest-hunters, and at length retired to Mowbreck Hall, the seat of his brother-in-law, John Westby. It is said that when beginning Mass shortly after midnight in the Chapel of Mowbreck, on the morning of All Souls, 2nd November, 1583, the blood-stained head of his son rose up before him and the bleeding lips seemed to repeat the words: "*Tristia vestra vertetur in gaudium!*" As George Haydock was not to suffer *pro fide* until the following 12th February (1584), this vision would seem to have been a species of "second sight," manifestation very rare in this country, but well known to exist in certain ancient Highland families, notably the Macdonalds of Morar, and the Chisholms of Strathglass.<sup>1</sup> Whatever it was, the aged priest was taken dead from the sanctuary. The mysterious head is still—or was till lately—declared to appear from time to time over the altar at Mowbreck Hall!

George Haydock studied his Humanities at Douay, and his philosophy and divinity partly at Rheims and the English College, Rome, but between the two courses, he returned to England for a short time for his health. His stay in the Eternal City coincided with the dissensions aroused in the English College by the excessive partiality shown to the seven Welsh students there by the Welsh rector, Dr Maurice Clenock. The thirty-three English "divines" made a great "stir," and one of their ring-leaders was Richard Haydock, the brother of George, already referred to. Cardinal Moroni (Morone), the Protector of the English College,

<sup>1</sup> In 1797, the Abate Macpherson, the Agent of the Scottish Vicars-Apostolic in Rome, wrote to Bishop John Chisholm, Vicar-Apostolic of the Highland District, on the subject of "Second Sight." In his long reply to the Agent, Bishop Chisholm, among other examples of the uncanny phenomenon, gave the instance of his own kinsman, the young Chieftain of the Chisholms, who fell at the head of his Clan, gallantly fighting for Prince Charles Edward at Culloden, 16th April, 1746. This tragic event had been clearly foreseen and described several days before the battle by a woman who had the "gift!" Bishop Hay of Edinburgh (1729-1811), used to say that in all the mysterious occurrences connected with "Second Sight," he never knew one remedy to fail and that was fervent prayer, devout reception of the Sacraments and a firm resolution not to dabble in the preternatural—a clear proof, added his Lordship, that "Second Sight" and its eerie manifestations are not from God! See *The Catholic Church in Scotland*, chap. xxi., by J. F. S. Gordon, D.D. (Glasgow: John Tweed, 1869.)

ordered the malcontents to submit to Dr Clenock under pain of expulsion, but upon the whole body of English students threatening to leave Rome, the matter was at length arranged, and Fr. Alphonsus Agazzari, S.J., appointed Rector. George Haydock seems to have had no share in a commotion which appears to have impressed the Italians very much owing to the stubbornness of the English, and the bold manner in which they "stood up" to a great prince of the Church and his attendant prelates!

Health again forced George Haydock to return to Rheims. He was received with great kindness by the Pope, Gregory XIII, before his departure, and on 2nd November, 1582, arrived at his destination. On 21st December, 1581, the Feast of St Thomas, the Apostle, he was ordained priest, and on 16th January, left for the English Mission. After reaching London, Mr Haydock at once made for the house of one Hackinson, who had formerly been a tenant of his father's at Hallowforth or Lea. This man, unknown to the priest, had since abandoned the Catholic faith, and become a Government spy or informer, and it was by his means that the newly-arrived missionary was arrested near St Paul's Church Yard, on 6th February, 1582. His captors, Norris and Slade—the latter an apostate and ex-student of the English College, Rome—carried Mr Haydock to an inn, where were also seized another priest, named Arthur Pitts, and a young Templar, Mr William Jenison. The law-students, hearing of the arrest of one of their number, gathered in force, and considering the fierce "town and gown" spirit, then reigning in London between the prentices and the gentlemen of the Inns of Court, there might have been yet another serious riot, but the incident for the moment merely ended in a noisy discussion on religion! Next day, Mr Haydock and Mr Pitts were conducted to the Tower, and shortly after their arrival the former, in the quaint language of Bishop Challoner, was "juggled out" of his money by the Lieutenant, Sir Owen Hopton. For fifteen months, Mr Haydock was left in a remote cell, cut off from all the world, save for the visits of the jailer and a disguised priest, who occasionally came to bring him Holy Communion. Later on, he was removed to another and better cell, where he appears to have remained until his trial, 2nd-3rd February, 1584, at Westminster Hall, when he and four other ecclesiastics were condemned to death for "being made priests beyond the sea by the Pope's authority," and "for conspiring the death of the Queen at Rome and Rheims." This last pretended plot was a fabrication to blacken the accused, and make the verdict of the jury against them a foregone conclusion. The Recorder of London, Fleetwood, showed his usual violent animosity against the prisoners, which the late Mr Gillow thought might be attributed to the fact that he, Fleetwood, was the cousin of Edmund Fleetwood, who at that time was endeavouring to involve the Allens of Rossall

Grange, the cousins of the Haydocks, in the penal laws in order to get their estates.<sup>1</sup> After the inevitable sentence of death had been passed, all the fellow-prisoners were brought back to their cells. On the morning of the execution, 12th February, 1584, Mr Haydock, with the connivance of the turnkey, was able to celebrate Holy Mass, which he did with much devotion. When at Tyburn, he again disclaimed in the most solemn manner any conspiracy or injurious intent against the Queen, though he admitted to the Sheriff Spenser, that he had spoken of her as a heretic. When someone in the crowd remarked that all those present were Catholics, the Martyr at once replied: "Catholics I call them which cherish the faith of the Holy Catholic Roman Church: God grant that from my blood there may accrue some increase to the Catholic faith." After the butchery of the hanging and quartering, the head of the martyr was recovered by the family. The skull, enclosed in a faded velvet bag, was long treasured in the Chapel at Cottam Hall, but passed subsequently to the Finch family of Mawdesley. Bishop Goss of Liverpool (died 1872), however, was of opinion that the skull in question, is really that of another member of the Haydock family, Fr. William Haydock, Cistercian of Whalley Abbey, executed 1537, for his share in the Pilgrimage of Grace of the preceding year.

*N.B.*—The last Squire of Cottam, William Haydock (1671-1715 ?), took part in the rising of 1715 on behalf of the Old Pretender—the James III and VIII of the English and Scottish Jacobites. Squire Haydock is supposed to have died of wounds or chagrin shortly after the collapse of the rebellion. Before joining the standard of his *de jure* King, he conveyed the manor of Cottam to his brother-in-law, John Shuttleworth, Esquire, of Hodsock Park, Notts. The estates eventually went to the Cross family, ancestors of the present Viscount Cross.

[Gillow: *Bibliographical Dictionary of English Catholics*. Burton and Pollen: *English Martyrs*, vol. i. Challoner: *Lives*.]

FEBRUARY 12

HEMERFORD, THE BLESSED THOMAS, MARTYR

(1553-1584). Beatified Dec. 15, 1929.

THE late Sir Walter Besant, the historian of "Cockaigne," used to attribute the dialect peculiar to the lower order of born Londoners to the fact that this somewhat jarring form of speech, was the lineal descendant in true

<sup>1</sup> Rossall Grange, near Fleetwood, Lancashire, the ancestral domain of the Allen family, to which Cardinal Allen, founder of Douay College, belonged, has since 1844 been the property and name-place of the well-known public school.

philological line, of the Anglo-Saxon ! However this may be, the custom of dropping the " h " was apparently quite the vogue with the class in question, and even with their betters in late Tudor times, and to it we probably owe the fact that the name of the Venerable Martyr commemorated on this day, is indifferently spelt Hemerford and Emerford. The loss of a contemporary *MS.* " life " of the valiant witness, by Dr Humphrey Ely, has left us in the dark on this patronymic point as on many other matters connected with the tragic career now under consideration. The researches, however, of Mr John Bannerman Wainewright, M.A., have helped to fill up the gaps, and from his investigations we learn that the Venerable Thomas Hemerford, or Emerford, may have been the son of William Hemerford, B.D., Rector of Folke, Dorset, and Margaret, *née*, Copleston, his wife. The son was born in or about 1553, and if so, was thirty at the time of his father's death on 4th October, 1583. Thomas proceeded in due course to St John's College, Oxford, where, in 1575, he took the degree of B.C.L.—that academic honour destined to sink to the lowest depth of the University distinctions in the " port and prejudice " Oxford of the eighteenth century, and not to recover its status of learned, respectability until the era of the great scholastic reforms inaugurated in 1800. After this achievement, Thomas Hemerford's life again becomes for us a blank for several years. He is said to have kept his terms for the Bar, where his law degree must have proved useful at the erudite " Moots," then not yet extinct in the Inns of Court. It was probably also during this period of biographical conjecture that he was received into the Church, no doubt by one of the priests, who, even in that epoch of racks, ropes and quartering blocks, haunted the hostels of the law, winning converts here and there from the gentlemen of the robe with whom, indeed, as a body, the Reformation at the outset appears to have been anything but popular. Then came the call, not to the forensic toga, but to the priesthood, with the august Mass and awful Tyburn tree in the background ! So in June, 1580, Mr Hemerford entered the English College, Rheims, for a short time, preparatory to proceeding to the English College, Rome, the famous " Venerabile," recalling always ancient memories of King Ina and the Saxon pilgrims to the Eternal City, though then (1580) but just recovering from the dissensions caused by the partiality of the late Welsh Rector, Dr Maurice Clenock, for his Cambrian compatriots, students of the place ! At the English College, Mr Hemerford—as a fellow-student, Edmund Thornell, related many years afterwards—was noted for his cheerfulness and " pleasant conversation," though to himself so severe that even passing rebellious thoughts were instantly repressed by self-imposed penances of such severity that his Confessor at length had to forbid them ! In March, 1503, he was raised

to the priesthood, and by that same Bishop, Thomas Goldwell, who had been secretary to Cardinal Pole—even before the latter became the last Catholic Archbishop of Canterbury. Bishop Goldwell had abandoned, perforce, his See of St Asaph after the accession of Elizabeth, because he could no longer, as he said, “perform a bishop’s office, being unable to celebrate Mass, minister the Sacraments, and preach.” The newly-ordained priest, before quitting Rome, was kindly received by Gregory XIII, who, among other spiritual favours, gave him permission to impart the Apostolic blessing, and grant a plenary indulgence to any person he might reconcile to the Church. The road to the deadly perils of the English Mission lay through Rheims, but like the Blessed Henry Heath, some sixty years later, the Rev. Thomas Hemerford was not destined to labour long in the troubled vineyard of his country. While waiting to have his horse shod at a village in Hampshire (unnamed) he was denounced by “a malicious heretic” as a priest who had lately preached in a barn, was thereupon seized, and after incarceration in Winchester Jail (probably) was sent up to London to the Marshalsea. His trial and that of two other priests for conspiring against the Queen’s life at Rome and for coming into the kingdom took place in the Queen’s Bench, Westminster, 6th February, 1584. None of the priests in question had anything to do with plots and conspiracies, though it is an undoubted historic fact that “Elizabeth’s assassination was not an object which merely entered into the Pope’s political programme in the reign of Gregory XIII, it formed one of his constant and cherished desires. It is true the Pope himself in no instance hired and dispatched the assassins, but in each case, as it was brought before him, he gave the assassins his moral support.”<sup>1</sup> Such were some of the genial world-politics engendered by the change in religion! There were, however, a variety of causes which would consign a priest to the scaffold at that time in England.

Thus, after 1581, any priest who absolved or reconciled anyone to the Church, was deemed guilty of high treason as he was by the Statute of 1563 for refusing the Oath of Supremacy for the second time.<sup>2</sup> The most, of course, was made by the prosecution of the foreign conspiracies, etc., against the Queen to render accused priests odious, and to dissipate any lingering scruples juries and people, generally, might have for condemning men to a horrible death merely for matters of conscience. When

<sup>1</sup> Meyer: “*England and the Catholic Church under Queen Elizabeth.*” Translated by Rev. J. R. M’Kee, M.A., of the London Oratory. (Kegan Paul: London, 1916.)

<sup>2</sup> The Oath of Supremacy was not administered to the Peers until 1678—The Titus Oates Plot period—when twenty-three lords, the flower of the ancient nobility, were deprived of their seats in the Upper House, a right which was not restored to their descendants till the time of Catholic Emancipation, 1829.

at Tyburn on 13th February, the martyr was further troubled with the "bloody question," *i.e.*, as to what he would do in the event of the Pope invading the realm. His reply, that if the invasion was for the Pope's personal aggrandizement he would resist him, but if for the restoration of the Catholic religion he would welcome the invasion, was an answer which accorded completely with the consensus of opinion of Catholics and Protestants at that time, who, in similar circumstances, always put the hoped-for spiritual advantage above merely temporal considerations. Our martyr appeared to suffer greatly—and no wonder—during the horrible butchery of the quartering, his evident torture was much noted by the spectators. A kindly answer given by one of the Protestant ministers, acknowledging the sufferer's scholastic superiority over himself, deserves to be recorded as the generous and humble avowal of a true gentleman, and a pleasant note of Christain courtesy amidst all the horrible circumstances which attended every Tudor execution for treason, real or imaginary.<sup>1</sup>

[Challoner : *Lives*. Burton and Pollen : *English Martyrs*. Gillow : *Bibliog. Dic.*, vol. iii.]

#### FEBRUARY 12

### FENN, THE BLESSED JAMES, PRIEST AND MARTYR

(?–1584). Beatified Dec. 15, 1929.

HE was a native of Montacute in Somersetshire, and as a boy was a chorister at New College, Oxford, his brothers, John and Robert, being Fellows there. He studied at Corpus Christi College, but was refused the B.A. degree as he could not take the Oath of Supremacy. This occurred probably the last year or the last year but one of the reign of Edward VI, for after the accession of Queen Mary, he became Scholar and Fellow. After leaving Corpus Mr Fenn was taken into Gloucester Hall, as the authorities there were secretly inclined to "the old religion," as Catholicism was already then called. He coached several private pupils, but being presently compelled by the Cranmer party at Oxford to leave the University, he went back to Somersetshire, where for some years he lived as tutor in the family of a gentleman, and when that employment

<sup>1</sup> "Then said a minister, Master of Arts of St John's College of Oxford, 'You and I were of old acquaintance in Oxford, by which I request you to pray openly and in English that the people may pray with you.' Then said Mr Hemerford : 'I understand Latin well enough and am not to be taught of you. I request only Catholicicks to pray with me.' Whereupon answered the minister, 'I acknowledge that in Oxford you were always by farre my better. Yet many times it pleaseth God that the learned should be taught by the simple.'"



was over, is said to have acted as steward to Sir Nicholas Poyntz. Before taking up this last post, however, he married, and kept a private school for a time. The death of his wife after the birth of the second child seems to have turned the thoughts of Mr Fenn to the priesthood. He opened his mind to the chaplain of Sir Nicholas Poyntz, his former patron, and being advised to persevere in his resolution, he first provided for his children and then went over to Rheims in June, 1579. He was ordained, 31st March, 1580, and left for England, 10th May, the same year. His spiritual labours were chiefly in his native county of Somerset, where he is said to have reconciled many persons to the Church. But eventually falling into the hands of the authorities, he was committed to Ilchester Prison. To degrade him further in the popular estimation, he was loaded with chains and placed openly in the market-place on several occasions, but the people, so far from being prejudiced against him, soon began to feel much compassion for one who was treated thus merely for his conscience. Not only that, but many persons who had lapsed from the Faith began to enter into themselves while others were led to examine the grounds of a religion which less than half a century before had been that of the established Church. Fearing the result of all this interest and inquiry, the local magistrates sent Mr Fenn up to London, where he was imprisoned in the Marshalsea. Curiously enough, he was not even then known as a priest, but was merely regarded as an "obstinate popish recusant." No sooner was it discovered that he was a "seminary priest," than he was brought to trial on the same day (7th February, 1584), and in the company with the Blessed George Haydock (*q.v.*) and several others. Meanwhile, he had not been idle in the Marshalsea, where he administered the Sacraments and reconciled to the Church many persons convinced, as was Charles II later on, that Catholicism is certainly "the religion to die in!" After sentence of death had been passed on himself and his companions, Mr Fenn spent his few remaining hours in devotion and cheerful conversation with some of the inmates of the prison. At Tyburn, he again asserted his entire innocence of any treasonable designs against Her Majesty, but on the contrary, wished the Queen (Elizabeth) "all manner of happiness." On the way to his death, his young daughter Frances, like the daughter of the Blessed Thomas More, made her way through the soldiers, and received her father's blessing amidst the tears and sympathy of very many of the spectators. The head of the martyr was impaled on London Bridge.

Two of the brothers of this noble witness to England's ancient faith, were also priests, and in their way great sufferers for the Catholic religion. Of these the Rev. John Fenn subsequently became chaplain to the Augustinian Nuns at Louvain, where he died, 27th December, 1615. He

was part-author with the Rev. John Gibbons, S.J., of the *Concertatio Ecclesiae Catholicae in Anglia adversus Calvino-papistas et Puritanos sub Elizabetha Regina, etc.*," published at Treves, 1583. It gives many biographical and other details relating to England during this period, and is an invaluable treasure-house of information on the subject.

[Burton and Pollen : *Lives : English Martyrs*, i. Gillow, *Bibliog. Dic.* Challoner : *Lives.*]

## FEBRUARY 12

MUNDYN, THE VENERABLE JOHN, PRIEST, MARTYR  
(1543-1583)

LIKE The Ven. Thomas Hemerford and the Blessed Henry Heath, this sufferer for the Catholic faith seems to have been ordained chiefly to give the persecutors and the gaping Cockney crowd yet another instance of priestly devotion and fortitude. John Mundy was born at Coltley, South Mapperton, Dorset, in 1543, and received his early education at Winchester School, founded by William Wykeham of happy memory, and "dedicated to Blessed Mary the Virgin." At New College, Oxford, later on, he seems to have studied the civil law, judging by the admission he subsequently made when examined by Walsingham. He became Fellow in 1562, but lost that position sometime after 1566 for not having communicated since the accession of Elizabeth. For several years after quitting the University, Mr Mundy taught at "divers places" in his native county, including Dorchester, but is described as being constantly troubled for his religion. Then came the vocation to the priesthood, and the usual journey to the English College, late of Douay, but at this time temporarily located at Rheims. At Dover, the would-be Church student had a very narrow escape! The close watch kept at the southern ports, and especially at the "gateway of England," for "Romish priests, Jesuits," and suspected papists generally, caused him to be haled before the Mayor by whom he was closely interrogated. A form of the "bloody question" was even put to him in a demand to call the Pope of Rome "a sorry knave!" which Mr Mundy refused to do. To all appearances the wayfarer was a lost man, but by this time, however, his Worship and the other municipal authorities had seized all the money of the luckless traveller, amounting to about forty-six crowns French, and forty shillings English. To press the matter further, would, of course, have meant prosecution and committal of the suspect and the handing over of the plunder to the Sheriff or Lord Lieutenant, so it was decided to say nothing more about it but to allow the stranger to proceed. Mr Mundy, in conse-

quence, crossed the sea, and ended his unsentimental journey at Rheims on 9th October, 1580. As he did not "live at the expense of the College," he appears to have been an extern student until he left the place for Rome, 12th August, 1581. By June of the following year he was already a priest, and returning to Rheims, left for the English Mission on 6th August. The few months that he ministered in England were, no doubt, passed in Hampshire, Dorsetshire, and the adjoining counties till February, 1583, when he decided to go to London. Probably the pursuit of the priest-hunters was getting very hot by this time, and a change of locality was therefore desirable. But his hour had come! England was not exactly an overcrowded country in 1583. Persons learned in the statistics of population estimate the inhabitants at that time at about two and a half millions. A man, therefore, might have ridden fifty miles in those days and not met as many people, yet in crossing Hounslow Heath, the then wild and desolate tract so long haunted by the mounted freebooter and the lurking footpad, the proscribed and virtually fugitive priest fell in with an enemy who recognized him for what he was! This was a certain Hammon, probably William Hammon, a lawyer and Justice of the Peace, and for Dorset of a all places! who was crossing the Heath, prudently enough—in view of the gentlemen of the road—with a great company like himself, all armed and mounted. The priest was at once surrounded and conducted to Staines, and a few days later to London. In his examination before Walsingham, the latter inveighed, as was his wont, against the seminary priests, but being satisfactorily assured by the prisoner that he was not "of a seminary," broke off, and railed against the English translation of the New Testament published the preceding year at Rheims. He finally struck the prisoner a violent blow, but notwithstanding all this, and the other distressing circumstances of his situation, the accused, though dazed and stupefied, adroitly managed to evade the artful entanglement of the "bloody question,"<sup>1</sup> by pleading that he was no learned theologian, but merely one of "the civil law." Upon being remanded to the Tower, the poor priest must have felt himself lucky to be confined in the "Broad Arrow Tower," instead of one of the dark, filthy, and rat-infested holds, which were torture chambers only a few degrees less horrible than the rack-house itself. When nothing of a heinous nature could be discovered against accused persons, especially "papists," at that time, it was a common trick of the prosecution to charge them with being people of notoriously evil life, the "facts" alleged in support of the same being couched in that broad Tudor language, which remains for all time characteristic of the bluntness of the age. In his subsequent examinations before Sir John Popham, the attorney-general, Mr Mundy was held up to the

<sup>1</sup> See page 61.

public hatred as a man of lewd and "naughty" behaviour—denunciations which were, of course, with a view to raising up against him a cloud of prejudice at his trial, which commenced on 5th February, 1583, when with George Haydock, James Fenn, Thos. Hemerford and John Nutter, all priests, and the predestined sharers of his martyrdom, he was indicted in the Queen's Bench, Westminster, for having at Rheims and other places conspired "to deprive the Queen and bring her to death; to raise sedition, to cause slaughter and rebellion; to subvert the government of the Kingdom and the sincere religion of God established in the same." Sentence of death was pronounced on the seventh, which was met by all the condemned with the chanting of the *Te Deum*. The gloom that had come over Mr Mundy in consequence of the vile aspersions on his character, seemed now to vanish, and he regained his former cheerfulness. The night before his martyrdom he wrote the following letter to his cousin, Mr Ducke, identified by Mr John Bannerman Wainewright, as the martyr, Edward Duke:—

"COSYN DUCKE,—I am now warnid to prepare against to-morrow to go dye, and yet I hope in Jesus Christ to live for ever, and having almost forgotten you and others my friends, was like to have passed you in silence. But I pray you make my humble commendations first and especially to my good Mr, and my only patrone, Mr Hyde,<sup>1</sup> secondly to that good Dr Mr Farnham,<sup>2</sup> the sweetest man in Christendome to live withall, thirdly and lastly to Mr President,<sup>3</sup> Mr Bayly, Mr Rainolds, and all other my good frindes, desiering them all most hartely to pray for me, and if I dyd ever offend any of them, that they will forgive me, and so I comitt you to God desiering that we may have togeather a joyfull resurrection with my harty comedations byddinge you fare well for ever in this worlde.—Your loving frynd and cosyn JOHN MUNDYN."

At Tyburn Mr Mundy was the last to suffer, meanwhile aiding by his prayers and exhortations his companions to fight the good fight. When several are in case, someone must be last, but it seems not unlikely that the lying rumours as to his so-called "wicked lyfe," had done much to make him odious in the eyes of Sheriff and executioners, who purposely, therefore, kept him till the end, the more to afflict him by the sight of the sufferings of the others. John Stow, the historian, gives the date of these martyrdoms as 12th February, the correct day, though Dr Bridgewater, in his account of the same, places it on the thirteenth.

[Challoner: *Memoirs*. Burton and Pollen: *Lives*.]

<sup>1</sup> Dr Thomas Hyde, Headmaster of Winchester School, when Mr Mundy was there as a boy.

<sup>2</sup> Robert Farnham, B.C.L., Fellow of New College, Oxford, then living in Paris.

<sup>3</sup> Dr William Allen of Douay and Rheims, later a Cardinal.

FEBRUARY 12

NUTTER, THE BLESSED JOHN, PRIEST, MARTYR  
(?-1584). Beatified Dec. 15, 1929.

EVEN in the deadly game of hide-and-seek between priests and priest-hunters in the England of Elizabeth, the sporting instinct, happily inherent in the race, had its part, as readers of Mgr. Benson's thrilling romance, *Come Rack, Come Rope*, will remember. Being pulled out of a "priest's hold" by a rough array of pursuivants, with the not unlikely prospect of rack, rope, and quartering-block in the near future, could not have been a very exhilarating game to the long-hunted sacerdotal quarry, yet even here, the grim humour of things now and then prevailed, and the seminary priest or Jesuit thus run to earth occasionally offered his congratulations to his captors for their sleuth-like perseverance and perspicacity! The situation was taken, as most people in those hardy days accepted what was unpleasant but inevitable, *i.e.* philosophically, and with no disposition to grumble because the cards of life and death had not turned up trumps. To break the law and whine over the very mitigated consequences, is a social trait that has been reserved as one of the peculiar marks of an "advanced democracy!" But among the many priest-martyrs who had no such "run" as was vouchsafed to Edmund Campion, Cuthbert Maine, Henry Morse, and the other Catholic heroes of the Reformation *Sturm und drang*, must be classed the Rev. John Nutter. Indeed, he belongs to the category of sufferers who simply walked into destruction—the fated few who were priested in some "seminary beyond the sea," and then came home to give life and limb almost immediately at Tyburn, York, or other well-remembered places where so many valiant champions of the counter reformation were glorified. John Nutter seems to have been a Blackburn man. St John's College, Cambridge (not Oxford, as Bishop Challoner says) was his Alma Mater, and in August, 1579, he went to Rheims with his brother Robert, like him to be a priest, and to die for it in turn. Being of the "Varsity," and no doubt somewhat older than the ordinary run of Church-students, Mr Nutter was ordained deacon and priest, at Laon, on 22nd September, 1582, by Monseigneur Valentin Douglas, O.S.B., Bishop of the city—one of the many Scots who then and until well into the eighteenth century, abounded in the various gradations of religious, civil and military life in France. He then prepared for the conflict of the English Mission, and made arrangements to sail with two other priests, Robert Woodroffe and Samuel Conyers, from Havre, which port Mr J. B. Wainewright informs us—as a very curious item of out-of-the-way information—was then commonly known to the English

as "Newhaven." Contrary winds, long delay, and a resulting shortage of funds prevented the sailing of the trio, but after considerable waiting, their vessel got out to sea, and made for Scarborough, which shows that the destination of the priestly adventurers was the northern and less harassed part of the English Mission. For some time prior to setting out, Mr Nutter had been ailing, and now the sickness—fever it is somewhat vaguely called—began to gain ground. To this misfortune was added a violent tempest, which battered the wave-tossed barque considerably, and finally drove it on the shallows and sand-banks near Dunwich. While the vessel was being repaired, Mr Nutter was taken ashore by his priest friends, and lodged in a local hostelry, but it unfortunately happened that a report, true or false, circulated in the town to the effect that a pirate ship had been seen off Orford Ness, and, of course, the worst suspicions were at once aroused. Mr Nutter was indeed allowed to lie, ill at ease, at his inn, but his companions were committed to prison for further inquiry as to their possible sea-roving antecedents.

Next day the crew of the Havre ship were got ashore, but the vessel itself ere long went to pieces. Among the goods salvaged for the benefit of the town were some bales which, upon being opened, were found to be full of what the local authorities no doubt described as "popish books and massing stuffe!" The upshot of all this was that Mr Nutter and the two other priests, Woodroffe and Conyers, were at once arrested, and after about ten days' detention at Dunwich, were sent to London in the custody of the town bailiffs and their escort, to be examined by the Privy Council. Mr Nutter, owing to his illness, the villainous state of the roads, and it must be added the great cruelty of his captors, suffered excessively all during the journey. After a brief examination before Walsingham at Richmond, he and his companions were committed to the Marshalsea. Here, according to the details given in the *Concertatio Ecclesiæ*, he was restored to health by "the favour of God," and with the presentiment that his time was but short, he set to work to benefit spiritually such fellow-prisoners as could be persuaded to harken to him, and not a few were reconciled to the Church. He was also constant in rebuking the vicious conversation and example so common in the jail, and his brave and salutary words seem to have been generally taken in good part by those for whom they were intended, for all recognized that the speaker was no ill-doer, but a most worthy man, who was merely there in consequence of his profession and conscience. Mr Nutter, to his great satisfaction, was given a garret at the top of the prison for a cell, a bare, cheerless place, no doubt, but one possessing the great advantage of the quietness requisite for prayer and meditation. Our prisoner underwent several examinations before the Council, and on the face of it, it seems not improbable that he would have

been reprieved after his subsequent trial, had it not been for the "bloody question," which the inconsistent and ill-advised Bull of deposition had by this time made almost inevitable. "While every priest was condemned to death who admitted he would side with his country's foes, mercy was shown to the small number who declared in favour of their country in its campaign against the Church. They were not set at liberty, but their lives were spared."<sup>1</sup>

All modern ideas, of course, are on the side of the Elizabethans in this aspect of the case, thus baldly put. Every nation, it is agreed, must be master in its own house, as to temporalities and public safety, but as before observed, the question was totally different in the late sixteenth century. The traditional view that the occupant of the Holy See was the Father of Christendom, even *quoad civilia*, was still strong, and, moreover, more than half Europe looked upon the Queen as an impious and bloody foe of the true faith, a usurper and cruel oppressor of the *de jure* Sovereign, Mary of Scots. The Catholics of England were much in the position of the Jacobites of 1715 and 1745, plus the added complications caused by the "religious difficulty."

Mr Nutter's reply at one of these painful interviews with the members of the Privy Council that he would act as became "an honest and Catholic priest" in case of invasion by a Catholic army, must have sealed his fate, though he refused to say definitely what an "honest priest" would do under the circumstances. Not till 1588 was the general Catholic reply given in the most practical and patriotic form, and one which has for ever given the lie to the base impugnors of the loyalty of the great majority of the adherents of this country's ancient faith. Mr Nutter was tried on 5th February, 1584, with the Ven. John Mundy and the other priests,<sup>2</sup> whose lives and deaths are set forth in these pages, and two days later in the grand old Rufus Hall at Westminster received sentence of death. The fame of his holiness had gone forth from the Marshalsea, and Catholics in great numbers crowded to Tyburn on 12th February to see their spiritual father fight the last awful but glorious fight, which was but one of the many tragic incidents of the great revolt of the century. And as they gazed at the scene of mingled horror and triumph, all "were wonderfully cheered by the peacefulness of his brow . . . that 'twas easy to see no mere man was fighting, it was God fighting in man."

[Challoner : *Memoirs*. Burton and Pollen : *Lives : Eng. Martyrs*. Meyer, as below.]

<sup>1</sup> Meyer : *England and the Catholic Church under Queen Elizabeth*.

<sup>2</sup> For the indictment alleging (falsely) treasonable designs against the Queen, see notice of Ven. John Mundy, under this date, 12th February.

FEBRUARY 15

BLESSED JOHN BAPTIST MACHADO, S.J., MARTYR  
(1580-1617)

BORN at Terceira, 1580, and admitted to the Society of Jesus at Coimbra, 1599. Came on the Japanese Mission, 1609, during the persecution that eventually resulted in the almost entire destruction of the native church. Despite the great difficulties of the time, Fr. Machado laboured with much zeal and fruit till his arrest. He was martyred at Omura, 22nd May, 1617, and beatified by Pius IX, with the other martyrs of Japan, 15th February, 1867.

[Mathew Tanner : *Societas Jesu usque ad effusionem Sanguinis*, pp. 279-80. For the general history of the rise and progress of the Faith in Japan, see under "The Japanese Martyrs" (p. 33).]

FEBRUARY 18

CLET, THE BLESSED FRANCIS REGIS  
MARTYR IN CHINA  
(1748-1820)

THE holy advice of Our Lord : " When they persecute you in one city, flee into another, " is brought forcibly to mind in reading the account of the life of this heroic labourer in the Chinese Mission field. Francis Regis Clet was born at Grenoble, France, 20th August, 1748, being the tenth of a family of fifteen children. The father, Césaire Clet, was a well-to-do merchant of the city. The mother's maiden name was Claudine Bourquay. After completing his course of Humanities at the Jesuit College of Grenoble, young Clet entered the diocesan seminary then under the direction of the Oratorian Fathers. He was already remarkable, as a student, for the facility with which he wrote Latin, and for great elegance of expression in his native tongue. The family of the Clets was a very religious one, and in 1764 one of the brothers, Francis, entered the Carthusians, while one of the sisters, Anne, either just before or after that date, became a Carmelite. Francis Regis felt himself drawn to the religious life also, but to some order or Congregation that had for its object the care of souls. In March, 1769, he became a novice in the Lazarists, or Congregation of the Mission at Lyons. The Congregation owes its foundation to St Vincent of Paul in 1624, its rule and constitution being confirmed by Urban VIII, eight years later. Francis took the vows



in 1770, and three years afterwards was promoted to the priesthood. For about fifteen years he filled the somewhat obscure but really very important post of Professor of Moral Theology at Annecy, where he acquired the sobriquet of the "Living Library" ! In 1788 the Superior-General of the Lazarists, Père Jacquier, died, and Fr. Francis Regis was among the representatives who went to Paris to elect his successor, Fr. Cayla de la Garde. The new Superior, a very able man, was next year chosen as one of the representatives of the Clergy of the *Tiers État* in the States-General, which in May, 1789, opened the tragic ball of the Revolution at Versailles. One of his first nominations was that of Fr. Clet as Master of Novices at the Paris house of St Lazare in the Faubourg St Denis. This spacious "Convent," as is well-known, was stormed by the revolutionists during the bread riots of July, 1789, and so much damage was done that both Fathers and Novices decided not to return there, at least for some time. In the event, they never regained possession of the house which, after the Reign of Terror, became a prison for female offenders.<sup>1</sup>

The rapid progress of the Revolution now brought all matters of Church and State to a crisis. In 1791 the Superior-General, Fr. Cayla, refused to take the oath of the "Civil Constitution of the Clergy," and went into exile.<sup>2</sup> At the same time, Fr. Clet received permission to join those of the Congregation who were labouring in the far-off mission field of China. In company with two young Lazarists, he reached Macao, the Portuguese Settlement on the Canton River, where he spent several months in trying to attain a working knowledge of Chinese. Later, he wrote to his brother, the Carthusian, describing the great difficulties arising out of a language consisting of sixty thousand characters representing not sounds but ideas ! "No wonder," he added, "I came to China too late to acquire a passable knowledge of them." Though he never arrived at any facility in speaking the tongue, he became one of the people, as far as adopting the dress, wearing the beard and shaving his head, could make him one. He lived in a wretched straw hut, which he humorously called his "straw palace," and during the year that he spent at Keang Si, he baptized about a hundred persons, adults, putting the

<sup>1</sup> By an Imperial decree, dated 27th May, 1804, the Lazarist Congregation was restored in France, but the new Mother House, 95 Rue de Sèvres, was not occupied till 19th November, 1817.

<sup>2</sup> By the "Civil Constitution of the Clergy," devised by the National Assembly, 12th July, 1790, Bishops were to be elected by the Clergy of the respective Departments, no Bulls of Consecration were to be applied for to Rome, the Pope as Head of the Universal Church—even the Jacobins conceded that much !—being merely notified of the fact of the election. The almost instant rejection of the schismatic measure by the great majority of the Hierarchy of France, forms one of the finest object-lessons in courage afforded by Church history, and is in glaring contrast to the pusillanimous conduct of the Bishops of this country when called upon to choose between Peter and Cæsar in 1534 !

Catechumen in each case through a long and careful instruction. In 1793 he placed himself at the disposal of Fr. Aubin of Hou-Kouang, where he remained for the rest of his life. The centre of the Lazarist Mission in those parts at that time was at Kucheng, near Lake Tong Tin, and the three priests in charge, Frs. Aubin, Pesné and Clet, had often to traverse an area of fifty leagues in quest of their scattered flock. The persecution of 1784 and its aftermath of fear and dejection, had caused not a few of the native Christians to fall away, while many of those who remained faithful were addicted to various heathen practices. Not the least of the labours of Fr. Clet and his colleagues was the restoration of this immense parish to a state of greater fervour. Between 1795 and 1797 Fr. Clet lost his two brother-priests by death, and henceforth he had to labour alone. By dint of great prudence he was able to escape unwelcome attentions from both unfriendly neighbours and the roaming bands of the "Pei-lien-Keio" faction, at that time in arms against the ruling Emperor, Kia-King. The native congregation numbered about ten thousand, of which some two thousand lived round about Fr. Clet's "straw palace," as he still called his poor abode. He had now the assistance of two Chinese priests, but had to take missionary journeys that often kept him many months from home. In this way he visited regions that had not seen a priest for years, and wherever he stayed, he exhorted and catechized, administered the sacraments, and performed all the other missionary labours with the zeal of a St Francis Xavier, or even a second St Paul ! In 1810 the Lazarist Superiors at Peking gave him the aid of Fr. Dumazel. Next year, owing to false reports that the foreigners in China were preparing to take possession of the Celestial Empire ! the Emperor issued a decree ordering all persons not natives to leave the country. But although upon the true nature of the calumny being represented to the Emperor, the Europeans were allowed to remain, much bad feeling had been excited among the ignorant populace in many places, and in 1812 Fr. Clet's church, "palace," and schoolhouse were burned to the ground by a furious mob. Six years later, he lost his faithful coadjutor, Fr. Dumazel, but the work of the two had already borne abundant fruit. The Christians, now a numerous body, loved and revered their surviving pastor as a saint. Scandals had been removed, and even the pagans regarded him as the friend of "the Master of Heaven ! " But the final trial was at hand. As in the days of the persecutions under the Roman Emperors, so it happened now to the Christians in China. They were accused in the May of 1818, not at aiming at the possession of the country, but of causing by their "spells," certain atmospheric disturbances, and a severe persecution commenced. For a time Fr. Clet concealed himself with a Christian family at Ho-Nan, but was eventually betrayed by a native apostate on

16th June 1819. For eight months he was carried from prison to prison, all the while being subjected to the various judicial tortures of the country, being now beaten on the face with leather straps, and now confined in a wooden cage, where one could not lie, sit, stand, or kneel! On 1st January 1820 Fr. Clet and a Chinese priest, Fr. Chen, were sentenced to death at Hou Pe, and in February following the Emperor confirmed the death penalty in the case of Fr. Clet, for "deceiving and corrupting" great numbers of the people by teaching them the Christian religion. Early in the morning of 18th February, the Martyr-missioner was taken outside the walls of the city and there, before an immense multitude, bound to a cross and slowly strangled to death. It was noted at the time that every one, from the Emperor, who confirmed the sentence, down to the renegade who had betrayed the deceased, met with a violent death within six months of the tragedy! Even the heathens were impressed by the fact, and as some of them phrased it: "See how all the persecutors of that religion have perished!" The venerable remains of the heroic missioner were buried in the Christian Cemetery at Oucheng-Fu, but in 1868 were transferred to France, and interred beneath the altar of the Chapel of the Mother House of the Lazarists at Paris. In 1843 the Martyr was declared venerable by Gregory XVI, and on 27th May, 1900, Leo XIII pronounced his Beatification. The life, heroic labours and death of the Blessed Francis Regis Clet have been a source of inspiration to many a labourer in this remote corner of the Vineyard of the Lord, and among them to the Bl. Jean Gabriel Perboyre, who, in 1840, shed his blood in the same sphere and cause, consecrated by so many martyrs and confessors during the past several centuries.

[An excellent biographical notice of the Bl. F. R. Clet appeared under the title of "A Modern Martyr," by Arthur Barry, in *The Ave Maria*, February, 1926.]

FEBRUARY 22

BLESSED DIDACUS (DIOGO) CARVALHO, S.J., MARTYR  
(1578-1624)

He was born at Coimbra, 1578, and entered the Society of Jesus, 14th November, 1594. He sailed for the Chinese Mission, 1600, and was for sometime stationed at Macao, province of Quang-Jung. Proceeded to Japan, 1609. Although a more or less continuous persecution had been on foot since it was first started by Taicō Sama, in 1597, the Jesuit Missions and congregations in the country were even then extremely flourishing, one of the Fathers, Valignano, having as late as 1606, the year of his death, no

less than three hundred churches and thirty colleges to the credit of his own individual efforts! But the war against Christianity increased in violence, and among the victims were Fr. Carvalho, who suffered for the Faith, 22nd February, 1624. He was beatified by Pius IX, 7th July, 1867.

[*Chronica de la C. de J. na Portugal*, vol. ii., p. 194. Also the account of the Japanese Martyrs and the vicissitudes of the Faith in Japan, page 33. Charles Sommervogel, S.J.: *Bibliothèque de la Compagnie de Jesus.*]

FEBRUARY 27

LINE, ANNE, THE BLESSED, MARTYR

(?—1601). Beatified Dec. 15, 1929.

THIS worthy imitator of the Ven. Margaret Clitherow, was the second daughter of William (John?) Heigham, Esq., of Dunmow, Essex, who seems to have been a scion of the family of Heigham of Hunston, Suffolk, a stock deriving its name from the hamlet of Heigham in the same county. Arms : Sa. fesse checquy *or* and *az.*, between three horses' heads, erased, *arg.* Crest : a horse's head, erased, *arg.* Mr Heigham, the father, was a strict Calvinist, Calvinism being very strong in the Church of England during Elizabeth's reign, and, indeed, the creed of Geneva was the beginning of that "Low Church" party, which has continued ever since to deny, and deny vehemently, the sacerdotal pretensions of the extreme "high" counterpart of the Establishment. Great, therefore, was the old gentleman's anger, when both his son, William, and daughter, Anne—the subject of this notice—became Catholics. He not only cast them both forth then and there, but effectually disinherited the son of the family estate, valued at about £9000 a year in present currency.<sup>1</sup> No further details are apparently forthcoming of either the conversion of the young folk or the "penalty" they had to pay in their being reconciled to the ancient, but sorely harassed Church of their country. The family estate eventually passed to a younger brother, and later Fr. Gerard saw him dressed in silken finery and showing all the signs of great temporal prosperity—as well he might, with such a fortune!—in his elder brother's room. The latter looked anything but affluent, and we can only hope that fraternal affection got the better of religious animosity, and that Mr Heigham, Junior, remembered whose wealth it was that gave him so much worldly advantage! As for the sister, Anne, she had the good fortune—and one

<sup>1</sup> But £700 a year at the time.

surely richly deserved—to meet with a young Catholic gentleman, Mr Roger Line, who, like her and her brother, had been “cut off” for embracing Catholicism. There is an aggravating absence of dates about these periods of Anne Heigham’s history. All we know of this last-mentioned incident is that she and Mr Roger Line were married sometime prior to 1586. But the worst of their troubles were before them! In the last-named year, Mr Line and his brother-in-law, Wm. Heigham, were arrested at a house outside Bishopsgate, while hearing Mass, and they were hurried off to the Compter Prison in Wood Street, together with the priest, the Rev. William Thompson, *alias* Blackburn, who was subsequently martyred at Tyburn (20th April, 1586). Roger Line and Wm. Heigham were, after much imprisonment, allowed to “compound their offence” by a fine of 100 marks each and a sentence of banishment. Mr Line went to Flanders, where he received a small pension from the King of Spain, part of which he regularly remitted to his young wife till his early death in 1593-4. About the time that Mr Line died in Flanders, Fr. John Gerard, the most venturesome of the English Jesuits after Fr. Parsons, opened a sort of residence or refuge for priests in London. Fr. Gerard, it seems, was a remarkably shrewd business man, and some of his co-religionists—perhaps not uninfluenced by envy!—accused him of too great a devotion to the mammon of iniquity! Anyway, he used part of the ways and means to open this useful house of retreat, and he selected Mrs Line, now a widow, to be the housekeeper of the same. She was, as he says, “just the sort of person that I wanted as head of the house I have spoken of, to manage the money matters, take care of the guests, and meet the inquiries of strangers. She had good store of charity and wariness, and in great patience she possessed her soul.”

This tribute was in every way deserved. Anne Line, despite constitutional ill-health—dropsical maladies and headaches are mentioned—was a woman of no ordinary kind. Her experiences seem to have quite weaned her from the world, without the least embittering her, and she rightly sought consolation in prayer, meditation and weekly communion—the latter practice then a rare one even in countries where the Church was free and untrammelled. She had a sort of holy envy of the priests, because they were so often called to martyrdom, while she was forced to be a mere spectator of these spiritual triumphs! It is said that the Rev. W. Thompson (*alias* Blackburn), above-mentioned, had assured her before his death that he would pray that she, too, might be permitted to give her life in witness of the true faith.

By the help of two lay-brothers and a warder, Fr. Gerard escaped from the Tower early in October, 1597. He had endured, while there, the fearful torture of being suspended by his wrists, no less than eight times!

But by this year, the retreat already described, had become insecure, so another was opened elsewhere, and Anne Line, of course, put in charge of it. On Candlemas day, 1601, Fr. Francis Page, S.J., arranged to say Mass there, but the great concourse of Catholics who came to be present at it, attracted attention, and the pursuivants burst in. The celebrant had just time to slip into a secret hiding-place prepared by Mrs Line, and effect his escape, but his protectress was arrested, together with Ralph Slyford and Mrs Margaret Gage, daughter of Lord Copley de Gatton. Harbouring priests was a felony, and therefore capital by the 27th Elizabeth, and on 26th February, 1601, Anne Line stood her trial at the Old Bailey on that charge. It is just possible that she might have secured an acquittal, owing to the absence of any very clear evidence, such confusion was there at the time of arrest, but when called upon to plead, instead of denying the fact, she boldly told the Court that, so far from regretting having concealed a priest, she only grieved that she "could not receive a thousand more!" Even without so anti-papal a judge as Sir John Popham, who presided at the trial, a conviction would have been inevitable, after such an admission as that. What she had told the Court, she repeated at Tyburn, on 27th February: "I am sentenced to die," said this valiant woman, "for harbouring a Catholic priest, and so far I am from repenting for having so done, that I wish, with all my soul, that where I have entertained one, I could have entertained a thousand!" With this great heroine of the fight for the faith in Elizabethan days, also suffered the Rev. Roger Filcock, S.J., and Dom Mark Barkworth, O.S.B., both for their priesthood.

[There is a contemporary account of Anne Line's trial and death in the Duke of Rutland's MSS. Challoner: *Memoirs*, i. Gillow: *Bibliographical Dictionary*, iv. Burke: *Landed Gentry*.]

#### MARCH I

### ROWSHAM, THE VENERABLE STEPHEN PRIEST, MARTYR

(?—1587?)

SOME mysticism, and it may be added some mystery, appear to hang around the name and history of this staunch witness for the Catholic faith. An Oxford man, he knew "the Shades of Oriel," and, like the illustrious Oratorian Cardinal, who centuries later, in a far different way, was to oppose the negations and misrepresentations of the great "national apostasy," he was Rector of that St Mary's Church, destined to hear the magic call

of Newman's enthralling voice. Like the mighty leader of the Oxford Movement, too, he had his period of doubt. Indeed, it must have been difficult for earnest and logical-minded men to have been free from grave misgivings during that period, 1570-80. Some forty years before, the Catholic Church had been enthroned in the land as the faith of the Ages. The "glorious hierarchy" of the nation stood linked, apparently indissolubly, to Rome by a common creed, and the dramatic ties of sacred Palliums and solemn Bulls of consecration, renewed as often as death removed from this "weary world" the primates and bishops of the realm. What changes, nay, what a revolution had come upon the country in the meanwhile! The Mass banned and proscribed!—Lutheran and Calvinistic heresies rampant—the shadow of St Peter dispelled and his obedience made a dire and deadly offence! No wonder Stephen Rowsham and many like him, had qualms! But he, at least, sanctified his adversity of doubt by constant prayer, and even before the great renunciation was made, he is said to have seen a mystic crown of stars standing over his head during a shower of meteors that called dons and students from their colleges and halls one night at Oxford towards the close of his residence there. It was, of course, the age when gentle and simple hung upon "portents," and the astrological calculations and horoscopes of Dr Dee, and the rest of the black brotherhood. But our Rector sought no astral promise of worldly benefit. He had already made up his mind as to his "call," and all he saw in the ominous coronet of stars was a vocation to the Catholic faith, its priesthood, and a martyr's crown! With this object in view he left Oxford for ever, and on 23rd April (St George's day), 1581, arrived at Rheims. The professors there must have been thoroughly satisfied as to the theological and general attainments of the ex-Rector of St Mary's, for by St Michaelmas day following (29th September), he was ordained priest at Soissons. He left for England, 30th April, 1582, in company with the Venerable Robert Ludlam, destined like him to die for the faith. Not only were all the ports and landing-places of the Kingdom at that time closely watched, but Walsingham's spies abounded everywhere—in Rome, at Rheims, and the other foreign seminaries, and even sovereign courts! Full descriptions of priests and others likely to be sent to England for the purpose of reconciling any of Her Majesty's subjects, or performing any of the rites of the old religion, were printed and passed from hand to hand, so it was extremely difficult for any suspected person to enter the country. Added to this, Mr Rowsham, though a man of "handsome and manly face," had, like Richard III, a wry neck, and one shoulder higher than the other. These very obvious defects, needless to say, made him an easy prey, and on 19th May, the same year, he was not only in custody, but a prisoner in the Tower!

While in this grim antechamber of death, Mr Rowsham is reported to have received in the most mysterious manner the requisites for saying holy Mass in his dungeon, and not only that, but to have been favoured with marvellous and consoling visions of Our Blessed Lord and His holy Mother. These latter transcendent spiritual favours are described as taking place when he had been placed in the "Little Ease," a narrow and harassing cell, where not only was it physically impossible to say Mass, but where the wretched occupant could scarcely even move! After many months of this torture, Mr Rowsham was transferred to the Marshalsea Prison. To do Elizabeth justice, she seems to have generally preferred banishment to death where "Romish priests and Jesuits" were concerned. It was the red hand of Burleigh that was the power behind the throne in matters of blood for conscience' sake. But in the autumn of 1585, the star of mercy was in the ascendant, and Mr Rowsham was sent into exile under pain of death if he returned. Already, as far back as 1582, the subject of this notice had been described in a letter from Fr. John Hart to Dr Allen as one who was fully prepared to give his life, if needs be, for the propagation of the Catholic faith. The mysterious circle of stars of his Oxford days also seems to have made an indelible impression on Mr Rowsham's mind that he was destined by God to glorify Him by means of supreme and crowning sacrifice. In February, 1586—the last and fateful year of the unhappy Queen of Scots—he was back in England, where he ministered to the Catholics of the Midlands. He was taken for the second time in Gloucester, in the house of a widow, named Mrs Strange, and at his trial at the ensuing Gloucester Assizes, freely confessed that he was a priest, and that he would gladly lay down many lives in the cause of restoring persons to the true religion. While in court he actually persuaded several prisoners awaiting trial for various civil offences, to be reconciled to the Church, and several of these who were subsequently acquitted afterwards lived as good Catholics. After receiving sentence of death, our indefatigable missionary was removed to the prison, where he found means to celebrate Mass on more than one occasion, and he was so engaged when the Sheriff's officers came to summon him to death. In fact, they courteously waited till the holy sacrifice was over, before placing him in the hurdle. The good people of Gloucester seem to have been far in advance of the time in the matter of humanity, for when the Martyr was left hanging on the rope, they would not allow him to be cut down for the butchery of the disembowelling, till the hangman and his assistants were satisfied that the sufferer was already dead—a like act of kindness which they also showed in the case of the Ven. John Sandys, who suffered in the same city and in the same cause. The date of the Venerable Stephen Rowsham's martyrdom is very uncertain, being placed by some writers



as on 10th May, 1587; by others on 11th August, 1586; and again, according, to a local tradition, as occurring some time in March, 1587, which latter time is the one adopted for the purpose of this notice.

MARCH 4

HORNER, THE VENERABLE NICHOLAS, MARTYR

(?-1590)

WHEN Nicholas Horner came to London from Grantley, Yorkshire, presumably not long before the momentous year of the Armada, he did not confine himself solely to his trade of tailor. No doubt, in the lonely dales and moors of his native country, he had often befriended the missionary priests who wandered about among the Yorkshire squires and yeomen, saying Mass here and confessing there, and helping to make the hardy North what it was for so long—a stronghold of the ancient faith. But aiding and comforting seminary priests and Jesuits was a terribly risky thing in London, especially late in Elizabeth's reign, where the Calvinistic Protestantism of the day was so firmly established and the look-out of pursuivants and priest-hunters so ceaseless and untiring. So it is not surprising to learn that in September, 1588, our valiant tailor was in durance vile—one of "those that will not take the oathe mynistred in the Leets, nor the Quene's parte againste the Pope's armye" (*Cath. Record Socy.*, vol. ii, p. 283). This, of course, was the speculative question as to what the individual recusant would do in the event of an invasion to effect a restoration of Catholicism. Nearly all the French Huguenots and Dutch Calvinists of the period would have been for the alien but "godly" army in their respective struggles with the papist foe, just as many of the harassed recusants were undoubtedly all for any power that would wrest the nation from the militant heresy that tortured and hanged the priests and fined and imprisoned the laity into beggary and ruin. Nicholas Horner's chief trouble, as before stated, was harbouring "priests," and he seems to have been regarded as a "dangerous person," for he was ironed, and ironed so heavily, that soon the rubbing and dragging of the rough and rusty manacles and fetters produced sores which in their turn caused dangerous wounds and finally gangrene on one of his legs. It was deemed necessary to amputate the limb—a fearful ordeal at all times in those unanæsthetic days, but one especially horrible when carried out in a common prison by some (no doubt) not very experienced or tender barber-surgeon! Even the tourniquet had not then been thought of!<sup>1</sup> But in his extremity,

<sup>1</sup> The invention of the tourniquet is attributed to M. Morel, a French surgeon, who, about 1674, used a cord tightened by the twisting of a stick to compress arteries for the purpose of lessening bleeding and pain in limbs about to be removed.

Horner was much assisted by "a good priest, to wit, Mr Huit, who was afterwards a martyr, who did hold his head betwixt his hands whilst it was adoin'g." The Bishop of Tarragona, in his history of the persecution in England, relates that during the operation the patient had a vision of Our Lord, which so filled him with rapture and delight, that he became quite unconscious of what was being done to him! The courage and patience of the afflicted man seem to have made a deep impression even on the officials, for shortly afterwards Horner was released. He was again arrested for assisting priests, the case this time being that of Christopher Bales,<sup>1</sup> who, after enduring fearful rackings and other tortures, was hanged and quartered in Fetter Lane the same day as Horner suffered in Smithfield. Horner stood his trial for his statutory offence, the harbouring of seminary priests, and being convicted, and refusing to attend the Protestant services, received sentence of death. It is perhaps strange that one who had already suffered so much and with such fortitude, should now have felt himself overcome with fear, yet such was the case, but betaking himself to prayer in his dungeon, the condemned had a repetition of his heavenly experience, on this occasion, the apparition of a bright crown, which seemed to follow him wherever he went. The account of this extraordinary occurrence was later sent in a letter to Fr. R. Southwell, S.J., and it appears also in the *Appendix Schismatis Anglicani* of Fr. Ribadaneira, and the writings of some other contemporaries. The Venerable Nicholas Horner was executed pursuant to sentence, in Smithfield, on 4th March, 1590, and as his conviction was for felony only, and not treason, he was merely hanged—an incident which ever since the advent of the House of Tudor and the resulting and but thinly disguised Oriental despotism, had become a very commonplace sight in the national life, and one scarcely worth the going to see!

## MARCH 5

ST JOHN JOSEPH OF THE CROSS, FRANCISCAN  
(1654-1739)

HE was born, 1654, on the Island of Ischia, Italy, of a family of noble descent, but from his earliest years almost, practised holy poverty to such an extent that, even as a child, he preferred to wear shabby clothes to those more suited to his station in life. Having acquired a good general classical education, he resolved at the age of sixteen to enter religion, choosing for this purpose the Franciscan Friars of the Alcantarine Reform at Naples.

Called also Bayles in Challoner's *Memoirs*.

The latter designation is, of course, derived from St Peter of Alcantara, who, in 1540, drew up the Constitutions of the Stricter Observance, which, after the usual opposition accorded most works undertaken for God and His Church, spread throughout Spain and Portugal, but was much slower in permeating elsewhere. In fact, St John Joseph of the Cross is said to have been the first Italian to join this reform, but he was a man entirely after St Peter of Alcantara's heart. In addition to the usual austerities of the Order, he added severe bodily macerations, fasting every day, never drinking wine, frequently taking the discipline, and restricting his rest to three hours every night! It had been his wish from first entering the Order to remain a simple Brother, for, like the great founder, St Francis, he did not consider himself worthy of the sacerdotal dignity. It was only by the exercise of the authority of his superiors that he could be prevailed upon to proceed to the priesthood. His great personal holiness and insight into the character and disposition of others, marked him out as a fit agent of Administrative work, and in 1674, he was sent to open the Friary of Alfila in Piedmont. The new Guardian began his labours there by assisting the workmen in the construction of the building, and after his installation as Superior, he showed all his old love of humility by performing regularly the most menial offices. Meantime, the fame of his sanctity brought crowds of persons to the place, and much of our Saint's time was occupied in preaching, giving retreats and hearing confessions. God attested the worth of His servant by the gift of miracles, especially with regard to the sick. In all his dealings with souls, public and private, he never failed to inculcate on those who sought absolution or advice at his hands, one eminent method of perfection, and that was a tender devotion to Our Lady—the spiritual Mother of the great Christian Family. By this means, he secured the final perseverance of many penitents whose wavering characters would have proved unequal in the face of temptation and the malign allurements of life. In 1702, the holy Guardian of Alfila was nominated Vicar-Provincial of the Alcantarine Reform in Italy, a post which, of course, greatly increased his influence for good, not only among the religious houses of his Order, but also the laity. He departed this life at the advanced age of eighty-five, 5th March, 1739, and fifty years later was beatified by Pius VI. As a pious youth and later as Founder of the Redemptorists, St Alphonsus Liguori had sought the counsel and holy consolation of the great Franciscan, and it was in every way suitable that the illustrious moralist and Doctor of the Church and the shining light of the Seraphic Order, should have been canonized together, as they were on 26th May, 1839. The occasion was rendered still further memorable by the enrolment among the saints of three other conspicuous names for sanctity, those of St Veronica Giuliani, St Pacificus of San Severino, and St

Francis Geronimo. It may be also mentioned as a matter of further interest, that it may have been this quadruple canonization by Gregory XVI, that inspired Thackeray to write the famous passage which, after the well-known lines in Macaulay's Essay on Von Ranke, is perhaps the best apology by one outside her fold for the truth and endurance of the Catholic Church.<sup>1</sup>

[Manning : *Lives of the Saints and Blessed of the Three Orders of St Francis*. (London, 1886.).]

MARCH 6

ST COLETTE

(1381-?)

THE familiar name of the great reformer of the Poor Clares is said to be a short form of Nicoletta. The father of the Saint, Robert Boellet, was carpenter to the Benedictine Abbey of Corbie, Picardy, in which village Colette was born, 13th January, 1381. Her mother's maiden name was Margaret Moyon. From about the period of her more advanced childhood the religious life seems to have had a great attraction for this remarkable woman. Even when quite young she was noted for a spirit of prayer and a love of seclusion, while displaying a certain force of character inseparable from those called to play a leading part in the practical affairs of life. With her it seems to have been a matter of having to search long and painfully for the right vocation. She tried in succession the Benedictines, the Beguines, and the Poor Clares. Not finding in these several communities the rest of soul for which she longed, she left each in succession, and for a time lived as a recluse. This form of solitary religious dedication was then drawing to the end of its long and saintly course, but

<sup>1</sup> "There must be moments in Rome, especially when every man of friendly heart, who writes himself English and Protestant, must feel a pang at thinking that he and his countrymen are insulated from European Christendom. . . . Of the beautiful parts of the great Mother Church, I believe among us many people have no idea. . . . Lo! yonder inscription which blazes round the dome of the temple, so great and glorious it looks, like Heaven almost, and if the words were written in stars it proclaims to all the world that this is Peter, and on this rock the Church shall be built against which Hell shall not prevail. Under the bronze canopy his throne is lit with lights that have been burning before it for ages. Round this stupendous chamber are ranged the grandees of his court. . . . Some of them were alive but yesterday, others to be as blessed as they walk the earth even now, doubtless, and the commissioners of Heaven holding here their court a hundred years hence, shall authoritatively announce their beatification. The signs of their power shall not be wanting. They heal the sick, open the eyes of the blind, cause the lame to walk to-day, as they did eighteen centuries ago. Thus you shall kiss the hand of a priest to-day who has given his to a friar, whose bones are already beginning to work miracles, who has been the disciple of another whom the Church has just proclaimed a saint—hand-in-hand they hold by one another, till the line is lost up in Heaven."—*The Newcomes*.

though separated from common life, it was no less carefully regulated by Church authority. The anchorite or anchoress had to be inducted into the cell, situated usually near the church, by the bishop or his delegate, and a proper maintenance had to be assured. The solitary's time was spent chiefly in prayer, labour and study, and it is interesting to remember that the *Regula* was mainly that laid down by Bishop Poore of Salisbury (d. 1327), in his famous "Ancren Riewle." Though Colette did not persevere in this state much longer than in the others, she formed during this period of strict retirement those habits of settled devotion and principles of mature judgment which were to serve her in such stead in the work associated with her name.

Ever since about the middle of the thirteenth century there had been a strong desire in several quarters for a return to the primitive rule as far as the Poor Clares were concerned. The great Order of Franciscan nuns under St Clare of Assisi, inaugurated by the Seraphic Founder himself at the Portiuncula in 1212, had originally followed the rule of St Benedict, joined to some observances of great severity, such as perpetual fasting and a (practically) constant silence. In 1224 St Francis gave his spiritual daughters a written rule, in which many of the austerities were considerably modified, and this Constitution was approved by Innocent IV in 1246. Gradually the Rule of St Francis received other modifications, and these were embodied in the rule drawn up by Cardinal Cajetan in 1264, and confirmed by Urban IV. Most of the Poor Clares followed the new and easier observance, but the houses in Spain and Italy followed, in the main, the old and more rigid Franciscan government. The great work of St Colette consisted in bringing back what may be called the religious mind and heart of the holy Founder with regard to the Franciscan nuns. She now approached the anti-Pope, Benedict XIII, and laid before him her views on this age-long subject.

The Anti-Pope, Pedro de Luna, though often styled "a crafty Spanish Cardinal," was, in fact, a man of singular ability, and he is regarded by some Church historians of weight as having been the rightful occupant of the papal throne during this period of the deplorable schism. He resided usually in Spain, at least latterly, and was recognized as Supreme Pontiff there, and also in France and Scotland.<sup>1</sup> Anxious no doubt to exer-

<sup>1</sup> During the great Schism of the West, 1378-1414, "the Church was torn, not into different sects, but into different *obediences*." All Catholics agreed that there must be a successor of St Peter to rule the Church on earth, but they did not agree as to which of the rival pontiffs had the best claim. Disastrous as were the effects of the Schism, the calamity had one good result, *i.e.* it proved that the faithful never lost their belief in the necessity of a visible head, and that the papacy as an institution could not be destroyed even by so violent an internal commotion. Theologians, moreover, agree that during this period, the infallible authority of the Pope was suspended, and remained so till the Council of Constance restored peace to the Church.

cise his restricted papal powers to the utmost, he not only permitted Colette to enter the Poor Clares, but issued some Bulls empowering her to found convents and extend her plan of reform. Colette also obtained at this time much useful advice from her confessor, a Franciscan, named Father Henri de la Beaume, while the Countess of Geneva added assistance of a material kind. It was at Beaume, in Geneva, that the first house of the reformed, or primitive, rule of St Francis, was opened. A little later, she inaugurated at Besançon another community, and from this time to 1444, houses of the "Colettine Poor Clares" followed each other in regular, if not very rapid, succession at Auxonne, Poligny, Ghent, Heidelberg, Amiens, and other centres. This truly valiant woman also succeeded in restoring the rule of several Franciscan houses for men to the more primitive norm, but the "reformation" here did not justify itself as did that of the female branch, and it was suppressed by Leo X, in 1517, the year after the famous Concordat, which virtually handed over the temporal government and patronage of the Church of France to Francis I and his successors.<sup>1</sup> Amidst all these arduous labours, which would have worn out even the strength of many a man, St Colette showed her invariably wonderful spirit of detachment and recollection. The austerities of the primitive rule, which she did so much to restore, were all fully practised by herself, notably in the matter of the severe fasting. She had, as have had all the Saints of God, her days, nay, her months, of acute trial, the dereliction of spirit, the seeming utter failure and the other "crosses," which try those who seek to achieve high and holy things. That she came triumphantly through the long and wearisome ordeal, and was more than once favoured by spiritual consolations and manifestations, were all duly dwelt upon in the process that led up to her Beatification by Clement XII, 23rd January 1740—almost the last pontifical act of his reign. Her Canonization took place, 24th May, 1807, when Pius VII was on the eve of that long struggle with the overmastering power of Napoleon, which culminated in the fall of the French Empire, and the restoration of the long-harassed pontiff to his full spiritual and temporal sovereignty. The first foundation of the Poor Clares in England was in 1293, when the house outside Aldgate was opened. Its name is still perpetuated in that of the "Minories." When Henry VIII laid his despoiling hand on the monastic system of the realm, the Order had two other convents in this country, one at Bruisyard, in Suffolk, and the other at Denny, in Cambridgeshire. At present there are

<sup>1</sup> The details of the Concordat of 1516 were arranged chiefly between the Pope and the Chancellor Duprat. The "Pragmatic Sanction" of 1438, restricting appeals to Rome to the greater causes, was abolished. The Kings of France received the privilege of nomination to all bishoprics and abbeys in the Kingdom, the Pope, of course, reserving the right of conferring the Pallium and Bulls of Consecration in the case of the archbishops and bishops respectively.

eleven houses of the Order in England, *i.e.*, at Baddesley Clinton, Warwickshire (opened, 22nd August, 1850); Bayswater, London (13th June 1860); Manchester (1863); present convent at Levenshulme (opened, 1868); York (1865); Arundel (1886); Bullingham, Hereford (1880); Darlington, St Clare's Abbey, (1857); Wavertree, Liverpool (1902); Woodford Green, Essex (1920); Sclerder Abbey, Cornwall (—); Flint (1928).

The famous convent of the English Poor Clares at Gravelines was established 1609, chiefly through the exertions of Mary Ward, aided by the Jesuit Fathers, the Bishop of St Omers and the considerable colony of Catholic exiles—notably the Gages—living in the place. Mary Gough was the first Abbess. The foundation flourished as a house of piety and prayer till October, 1793, when it was seized by order of the revolutionary popular Assembly of Gravelines, and the Nuns—including the Benedictines and Poor Clares from Dunkirk—were declared prisoners under guard. In April, 1795, they were permitted to cross over to England, and after sojourning at Catterick, Coxside, and Gosfield, Essex, unwisely it seems, returned to Gravelines in 1814. The day of Continental exile had passed, and the restored convent did not flourish. The numbers diminished, and the last Abbess (Madame Cullen) died January, 1838, and the last English professed Sister, Madame Latham, at home with her relations at Liverpool, in 1857.

[Germain: *Sainte Colette de Corbie*, Paris, 1903. *Cath. Record Socy.*, vol. xiv, "The Religious Houses of the United Kingdom."]

#### MARCH 7

### LARKE, THE BLESSED JOHN, PRIEST, MARTYR

(?-1544)

If the expressive word, "lark," for fun in practice, which is said to be derived from the Anglo-Saxon, *lac*, meaning "sport," was in vogue in Henry VIII's time, we can well imagine the Blessed Thomas More making many playful allusions to the cant word and the surname of his parish priest, the Rev. John Larke, sometime rector of Chelsea. However this may have been, there are not many details to record of the friend and fellow-martyr of the saintly Chancellor. Larke was apparently a doctor of divinity—Cresacre More calls him "Doctor Larke" (*Life of More*), and in 1504 he became rector of St Ethelburga, Bishopsgate. In 1526 he exchanged the former "cure" for the rectory of Woodford, Essex, which he held till 1530 (or 1531), when Sir Thomas More presented him with

the living of Chelsea. This last appointment was not a royal benefice, but one originally belonging to the Abbots of Westminster, which Sir Thomas as Chancellor had the right to bestow by grant from the said Abbey of Westminster. It was the custom of More to serve his parish priest's Mass daily, and this holy contact soon ripened into a close and binding friendship. The judicial murder of the Seneca of Christendom, as More was regarded, preyed much on the mind of his pastor, but it was not until nine years had elapsed that the Rev. John Larke was called upon to shed his blood in the same and most worthy cause. By "words, writings and acts," he is stated to have maintained the necessity of the primacy of the successor of St Peter over the universal Church, and so courageously took the consequences, together with the Blessed Germaine Gardiner and the Ven. John Ireland, priest. The holy trio suffered at Tyburn, 7th March, 1544.

MARCH 7

GARDINER, THE BLESSED GERMAN OR GERMAINE  
MARTYR  
(?-1545)

It is thought that German Gardiner was cousin to the Stephen Gardiner, the famous Bishop of Winchester, and Chancellor, who suffered so much under Edward VI for his opposition to the fanaticism of the native and foreign reformers. The name German or Germaine is sometimes spelt also "Jermyn." Gardiner studied at Trinity Hall, Cambridge, and after leaving the University is reported to have become secretary to his kinsman and namesake of Winchester. He first came out in a public character as the writer of a letter against John Frith, the heresiarch, who in 1533 inveighed against the doctrines of transubstantiation and purgatory, for which denials he was ultimately (1533) burnt at Smithfield. It is noteworthy that this young and courageous ex-Etonian polemic was "the first of the English [Protestant] martyrs who maintained the doctrine of the Sacrament which was subsequently adopted in the Book of Common Prayer" (*Dic. of Nat. Biog.*, vol. vii, under Frith). Gardiner's "Letter" concerning "the demeanour and heresy of John Frith," appeared after the fiery death of the latter, and in it our author severely attacked the dead man for "setting abroad these heresies which lately sprung up in Almayne [Germany] by the help of such folk be spread abroad into sundry parts of Christendom tending to nothing else, but to the division, and rending asunder of Christ's mystical body, His Church, the pulling down of all power and utter subversion of all commonwealths." The religious and social effects of the rising re-



formation were never so tersely or truly summed up, and prognosticated, only Henry VIII, his aiders and abettors, were not the men to read the writing on the wall! Ten years later, when Henry inaugurated the plunder of the parish churches, so systematically continued under his son and successor, Edward VI, Cranmer, of course, lent his authority to the evil work of making away with holy shrines and images. The wide-spread indignation caused by this sacrilegious robbery which, needless to say, was for the private profit of the rapacious King and the greedy harpies of the Court—gave rise to an outcry against the Archbishop, and the articles of impeachment against him were drawn up or copied by the subject of this notice. As the vandalic plundering was a Court measure, nothing came of the much-talked-of prosecution, which appears to have been a mere subterfuge to divert public attention from a horrible scandal, and to stop the rising tide of general and angry opinion. The pass to which Henry's Church policy had brought the country, however, seems to have opened Gardiner's eyes. He had long reflected on the heroic constancy of the Carthusians of the Charter House, the saintly Bishop of Rochester, Cardinal Fisher, Sir Thomas More, and the other heroic witnesses who had died in protest against the separation of this nation from the rock of St Peter, and the consequent abandonment of the Church and people to the storms and waves of constantly varying heresy and misbelief. Mr Gardiner's sentiments becoming known, he was called upon to subscribe the Oath of Supremacy, and refusing, was indicted together with the Rev. John Larke, (*q.v.*), John Ireland and John Heywood, at the Sessions House, Westminster, 15th February, 1545. The lengthy indictment among other things charged the accused with, "choosing, wishing and desiring, and cunningly machinating to deprive our said King, Henry VIII of his royal dignity, title and state, that is to say, of his dignity, title and name of supreme Head of the English and Irish Church." All received sentence of death and died courageously for the keystone of Church government at Tyburn, on 7th March following, except John Heywood, who recanted and was reprieved, a fact which proves that the rest of the martyrs might have purchased their lives by a like denial.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The John Heywood mentioned above was the famous wit and musician, who amused the English Court from the days of Henry VIII to that of Elizabeth. In spite of his taking the Oath of Supremacy and so saving his life, he had no sympathy with Protestantism, and gladly welcomed the accession of Mary (1553), whom he addressed in a "Latine oration." Disliking the religious changes under Elizabeth, he retired to Malines, where he died about 1580, at a very advanced age. Heywood's wit and humour were always refined, a remarkable trait, indeed, in that age of coarse mirth! His best-known piece, "The Four P's," *i.e.*, a Potheary, Palmer, Pardoner and Pedlar," is a satire on some ecclesiastical abuses, a sort of prose "Piers Plowman" in lighter vein. His son, Father Jasper Heywood, the learned Jesuit and author, died at Naples, 1598.

MARCH 7

## IRELAND, THE BLESSED JOHN, PRIEST, MARTYR

(?-1544). Beatified Dec. 15, 1929.

LEARNED researches, published in the *Downside Review* for 1913, and by the late Fr. John Pollen, S.J. ("The Venerable Martyrs of England") inform us that the fellow-sufferer with the Rev. John Larke and German Gardiner was, like the former, sometime Chaplain to Sir Thomas More, and later Chaplain of the Roper Chantry at St Dunstan, Canterbury. He also held the post of Chaplain to William Roper, son-in-law of the martyred Chancellor. The Roper family lived at Eltham, Kent, and Ireland is sometimes referred to as Vicar of the parish. As recorded previously, the Rev. John Ireland was condemned to death at Westminster, February, 1544, for refusing to acknowledge the Supremacy of Henry VIII in matters of religion, and martyred with his two companions at Tyburn, on 7th March following.

MARCH 15

## HOFBAUER, ST CLEMENT MARY, CONFESSOR

(1751-1820)

THE German dramatist, Werner, who, after being thrice married and thrice divorced became a Catholic and died a priest at Vienna (1823),<sup>1</sup> used to say that he only knew of "three men of superhuman energy—Napoleon, Goethe, and Clement Hofbauer." The last of the trio so honoured by this judgment, and who was, under God, to do so much for the revival of religion in Germany and Austria, was born at Tasswitz, in Moravia, 26th December, 1751. The family, which was of Bohemian origin, apparently, was named Dvorak, which later became Germanized into Hofbauer. The father of the future Saint, as in the case of Cardinal Wolsey, was a butcher and grazier, but he died when Clement Mary was but six years of age, leaving a wife and twelve children. In consequence, the family was but ill-provided for, and at a very early age, Clement was apprenticed to a baker, but being of a decidedly studious turn, he, like so many other geniuses in similar uncongenial circumstances, devoted all his spare time to serious reading, acquiring a working knowledge of Latin and, of course, Christian doctrine. In 1771 he left the bakery, and became a servant in the Premonstratensian Monastery at Bruck, where for four years he had

<sup>1</sup> *Chambers's Biographical Dictionary*, 1907.

greater facilities for study in the grammar school of the Fathers, while, needless to say, faithfully performing all the duties that fell to his charge. Though the period was material, irreligious, and generally coldly sceptical, to a degree that has won for it the name of the "age of philosophic doubt," the spirit of self-mortification, notwithstanding Carlyle's caustic comment on the epoch—"soul dead, stomach much alive!"—was not entirely extinct. The century had already produced St Benedict, Joseph Labrè, among other eremitical or semi-eremitical servants of God. In 1774 or 1775 Clement Mary left the monastery and lived for a while as a hermit at Mühlfrauen, not far from his own home. Here he did much good by giving holy counsel to the pilgrims who came to visit the church of the place dedicated to Our Lord scourged at the pillar, but Clement's peace was not for long. The secularizing mania of Joseph II—"my Brother the Sacristan"—as Frederick the Great termed the intermeddling Emperor—was then at its height, and the policy of suppressing monasteries and convents, and generally furthering the progress of infidel "enlightenment," affected even the humble recluse of Mühlfrauen. Hermitages were "put down" with the rest, and Clement perforce returned to his baker's trade, this time at Vienna, in a house known as "the Iron Pear," near the Ursuline Convent, the latter destined in later years to be the scene of some of his most fruitful labours. Between 1778 and 1784, Clement made three pilgrimages to Rome, going there much after the manner of Oliver Goldsmith, nearly thirty years before, *i.e.*, on foot, and relying on casual assistance for support. After the second journey he and his companion, Peter Kunzmann, lived for a while as hermits near the church of Our Lady of Quintiliolo at Tivoli, receiving the habit from the Bishop, Mgr. Barnabo Chiaramonti, later to be illustrious as Pope Pius VII. But holy seclusion amidst the ancient ruins and vineyards of the classic Roman Tusculum, was not our Saint's call. By 1783 he was back in Vienna, where the generosity of three old maiden ladies, named Maul, enabled him to enter the university with a view to preparing for the priesthood. All the academies and seminaries in the Empire had then been secularized, and were full of the "crank" theories which Joseph II and his abettors loved so well. Clement's stay here is chiefly remarkable for an outspoken rebuke he administered to one of the professors for his un-Catholic attitude—a warning happily taken in good part, and ending by the conversion of the lecturer.

In 1784 Clement was again in Rome, where he and his friend, Thaddeus Hübl, were received into the Redemptorist Novitiate, St Guiliano on the Esquiline. Clement's fervour and that of his friend in prayer, obedience and study, was such that even before they were ordained priests, St Alphonsus, the Founder of the Congregation, said of them:

"God will not fail to promote His glory by their means. Their mission, however, will be different from ours. In the midst of the Lutherans and Calvinists in which they will be placed, the Catechism will be more necessary than preaching. These two priests will do a great work, but they will have need of greater light."

The novitiate of the first German aspirants to the Redemptorist foundation was considerably shortened, in view of their age and fervour. They were professed, 19th March, 1785, and at Alatri, ten days later, were ordained priests. Religious orders being then, generally, under the ban, in the Austrian dominions, Fathers Clement and Thaddeus, after vainly endeavouring to make a commencement of the Congregation in Vienna, came to Warsaw, February, 1787, receiving from the Nuncio there the Church of St Benno (Bishop of Meissen, 1106), as their cure. The religious condition of Poland, and especially Warsaw, was—thanks mainly to "Philosophism"—on a par with that of most countries of Europe at that time. Scepticism and immorality were fearfully rife, parishes were neglected, and some even of the clergy were freemasons! During the twenty-one years of St Clement's Apostolate in Warsaw, enormous good was effected. The church was beautified and enlarged; religious sodalities and schools established; sermons and discourses on Christian doctrine and morality multiplied and Catholic literature disseminated. In October, 1801, he could write to the Superior-General: "The fame of our instructions, preachings and catechizing, has reached even to Moscow, and throughout Russia, even to Siberia. The fruits of this are incalculable. Not only the people of the town, but from all parts of the country, and even from distant provinces, persons come for five, six, or eight days, hear the word of God, receive the sacraments and go back to their homes strengthened and comforted by God's grace."

The "our" in this remarkable statement refers, of course, to the, by then, large and flourishing Congregation of Redemptorist Fathers and Brothers—Polish, French and German—that had been formed meantime at St Benno's, and their joint labours and the results. The Nuncio at Warsaw had already described the House of the Fathers as a centre of "wonderful success in preaching and in the administration of the Sacraments," and as attracting an "extraordinary influx of people."<sup>1</sup> In addition to his almost ceaseless activity for souls at Warsaw, Fr. Clement found time to open houses of the Redemptorists at Constance on a property,

<sup>1</sup> The Nuncio was Lorenzo Marquis Litta of Milan, titular Archbishop of *Thebes*. He was created a Cardinal by Pius VII (1801), and later became Prefect of Propaganda and Cardinal-Vicar. He had also filled the post of Papal Ambassador at the Coronation of the Czar, Paul I. Cardinal Litta corresponded frequently with St Clement Hofbauer, but the letters have unfortunately disappeared since their deaths, both of which occurred in 1820.

known as "Mount Tabor" (1802), and another at Treberg, which latter foundation, however, was soon suppressed by the non-Catholic Government, at the instigation of the worldly Vicar-General of the diocese, the Rev. Baron Von Wessenburg and a number of local do-nothing clergy, who *horribile dictu!* jealous of the zeal and success of the Redemptorist Fathers, denounced them as a band of "ill-judged fanatics!" The years 1805-8, were in truth a period of acute trial for St Clement and his brethren. Poland was by now the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, and entirely under the domination of Napoleon. Unfortunately, wherever the French army penetrated, irreligion and profligacy seemed to follow as a matter of course, for the very recent Concordat, needless to say, had not exorcised the godless spirit of the Revolution, or been able to undo in a day the awful moral and social devastation caused by the Jacobin propaganda. Intelligent travellers in France, like Henry Redhead Yorke, were painfully impressed by the unmistakable signs of decadence to be seen everywhere, even ten years after the Terror—whole tracts of country out of cultivation, colleges and schools destroyed, the peasantry and working classes, generally, unemployed, and hordes of vicious young persons of both sexes roaming about in utter ignorance and often in utter destitution.<sup>1</sup> All the evil fruit of the much vaunted "epoch of liberty!" appeared to be reproduced in the imperial armies long recruited as they were from the very classes most demoralized by the recent colossal upheaval.<sup>2</sup>

A rebuke that one of the priests had to give to a French officer for flagrantly scandalous conduct in church, led to a collision with the authorities, and King Frederick Augustus of Saxony and Prince of Warsaw—a vassal-potentate of Napoleon's "Confederation of the Rhine," ordered St Benno's to be closed and the Fathers sent into exile. So great was the indignation of the people, that it required all the efforts of Marshal Davoust and the large French garrison to prevent something worse taking place than a vigorous public protest. After a month's detention at Custrin, where they were most kindly received by the Protestant population—for all Germany,

<sup>1</sup> See Introduction to *France in Eighteen Hundred and Two, Described in a Series of Contemporary Letters*, By Henry Redhead Yorke, edited and revised by J. A. C. Sykes. (London: William Heinemann, 1906.)

<sup>2</sup> Of course, there were notable exceptions in this as in other matters. As the Empire ran its course of meteoric victories and blood-stained glories, a better class of recruits—largely instructed in the village schools established after the Concordat by the local Curés, Christian Brothers, etc.—replaced the old infidel Republican element. The excellent army chaplains also helped on the work of betterment. Many of the higher officers, too, were at least practising Catholics, while some, as General Druot—"the most virtuous man I have ever met," as Napoleon once said of him—and Marshal Ney, were decidedly religious-minded. Ney at his execution (2nd December 1815) told the Curé of St Sulpice, who attended him, that he had rarely omitted his prayers, night and morning, or gone into action—five hundred of them—without first commending his soul to God! See Thiers, *History of the Consulate and Empire*.

prostrated by Austerlitz and Jena, was now glowering with rage against the French invaders—the exiled religious went on to various destinations. Fr. Clement and a young ecclesiastic, named Martin Stark, going to Vienna. From that time, 1808, till his death in 1820, Fr. Clement was to display in the imperial capital all the heroic virtues and untiring labours that had hitherto characterized him, and to even a far greater extent. As Rector of the Italian Church, then as Chaplain to the Ursuline nuns and Rector of their Church, he carried on the work of prayer, preaching and direction which has given him the title of “the Apostle of Vienna.” During the greater part of this period the life-and-death struggle with Napoleon threatened the very existence of Austria, yet the voice of the Apostle was heard even above the reverberating thunder of the guns! Catholicity, half-strangled by “Josephism,” and grievously distracted and hampered by war and revolution, not only revived, but began to flourish in Austria. The zeal of the wonderful Redemptorist spread to the rest of the clergy, and everywhere was to be seen the renaissance of the Faith. The fame of St Clement’s preaching was such that during the Congress of Vienna (1814-15) even the sophisticated and, no doubt, blasé diplomats, who deliberated wisely all day and danced indefatigably all night, made a point of attending the sermons in question regularly every Sunday.

Cardinal Consalvi, “the Siren of Rome,” who represented Pius VII at the Congress, frequently consulted St Clement on matters of the highest importance, while Cardinal Severoli, the Nuncio, often asked his advice, as did Richelieu that of St Vincent de Paul two centuries before, on the subject of episcopal promotion. St Clement’s apostolate was equally shown in his solicitude for the poor, and for the conversion of Jews and non-Catholics, while he powerfully influenced the trend of thought of the great Catholic apologist and critic, Frederick von Schlegel. His weekly “Conversations” with an ever-increasing circle of young students, university lecturers, professional and business men, were the means of training a solid phalanx of Catholic youth and devout laymen destined to be of great use and support to the Church in after years. Though a final effort was made by some enemies of the Redemptorists about 1819 to have the Congregation suppressed in Austria, the affair came to nothing, and the last year of St Clement’s life was passed in peace. On the fourth of March, 1820, while hearing the confessions of several persons, he was taken rather seriously ill, and next day preached for the last time, the topic being the strict account we all must give to God of our lives and actions. He was able to sing the Requiem Mass on the ninth, for the Princess Jablonowski, but was so prostrated at the conclusion, that he had to be removed to bed. He passed from this world he had done so much to sanctify, on 15th March, 1820, just after hearing the Angelus bell rung,

and having joined in the prayers to Her through whose intercession he had effected so much lasting good, and to such a countless number of souls! His venerated remains were interred on the seventeenth in the cemetery of Sta Maria von Enzersdorf, distant about three hours from Vienna, in the tomb prepared by his great friend, Baron von Penkler. Though no general notice had been given of the Requiem, vast crowds of nobles, scholars, soldiers, professional and business people, attended the obsequies, all anxious to testify the intense veneration they felt for one whose whole life had been one long and heroic series of spiritual labours, like those of St Francis Xavier or even of St Paul! The (practical) restorer of the Austrian Church, and the Apostle of Vienna, was beatified by Leo XIII, 29th January, 1889, and canonized by Pius X, 20th May, 1909.

[*Life*, by Fr. R. P. Michael Haringer, Consulter-General of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer. Translated into English by Lady Herbert of Lea. (Fr. Pustet & Co., New York and Cincinnati).]

MARCH 15

## HART, THE BLESSED WILLIAM, PRIEST, MARTYR (?-1583)

WHEN Richard Flemmyng, Bishop of Lincoln, started Lincoln College, Oxford, on its scholastic career in 1427, the venture was a sort of academic reparation for having once given his support to "the pernicious doctrines" of Wycliffe! Moreover, he specially provided that any Fellow who shall favour the same was "to be cast out like a diseased sheep from the fold of the said College."<sup>1</sup> This orthodox setting long marked Lincoln and its men. Even after the accession of Elizabeth—when the Act of Supremacy had been strictly enforced, many Fellows and students, expelled for refusing the same, and a number of Zwinglian divines again brought back from Zurich, Strassburg, and other centres of militant Protestantism to reinforce the new opinions—Lincoln College still clung to the Catholic tradition, at least in secret. In 1571 a young student from the beautiful Cathedral City of Wells, entered the place, and three years later proceeded B.A. This was William Hart, distinguished alike for his talents and happy disposition. The Rector of the College at that time was the famous Dr John Bridgewater, *Aquapontanus*, as he Latinized it, in accordance with the "Ciceronianism" of the day. After eleven years of rule at Lincoln, during which time he did all he could secretly to preserve and

<sup>1</sup> Hon. G. C. Brodrick: *A History of the University of Oxford*. (Longmans, Green & Co.)

foster the waning Catholicity of the University, he resigned and went to Douay with "certain young scholars," and also, as Anthony Wood adds, "some of the goods of the College"! These latter may have been "church stuff," reliquaries and the like, which would have fared badly at the hands of the bitter Puritan faction then dominant at Oxford, as elsewhere, in the country. Dr Bridgewater lived much after this at Treves, where he became the part author of the valuable *Concertatio Ecclesiæ Catholicæ in Anglia* a great authority on the domestic religious troubles of the time.

Among the "young scholars" who followed the example or counsel of their Principal, was William Hart. He not only entered Douay College, where he promptly gained the affection of all by his modesty, patience, and remarkable devotion, but he soon came to be regarded as a student of extraordinary promise. Conscience and exile, however, were not the only sources of his troubles. The eighteenth century had not yet come upon the world with its lethargic habits and monstrous guzzling and general self-indulgence. But humanity knew well enough the torture of "stone and gravel," and among its victims was Mr Hart. Under advice, he left Douay to take the waters at Spa, but deriving little benefit from the Springs, submitted later to an operation at Namur. Within a century and a half, surgeons, such as Cheselden, were to accomplish the feat of cutting for the stone "in less than a very few minutes,"<sup>1</sup> but in 1577, things were very different. Mr Hart, however, went through the doubtless fearful ordeal, so absorbed in prayer that he did not appear to feel the knife, and shortly afterwards was perfectly cured. Next year, Dr Allen sent him to Rome, where, as at Douay, he won golden opinions, and was distinguished by his oratorical powers, a discourse he gave in the presence of Cardinal Buoncompagno, the Protector of the College, being especially commended. After his ordination in March, 1581, he left Rome for the English College, then temporarily sojourning at Rheims. The Pope, Gregory XIII, accorded Mr Hart and the other priests who were leaving with him, a private audience, after which Mr Hart made a set speech, in which he thanked the Pope for having "opened up and cleared of its obstacles, the way of return to the faith and practice of our ancestral religion, for all who are willing to enter upon it and to walk therein." Following a short stay at Rheims, Mr Hart, with Mr Harrison and Mr Proberts, came upon the English Mission. The field of his pastoral exertions was Yorkshire, where he devoted himself so zealously, not only to the Catholics of the moors and dales, but to the crowds of recusants in the prisons for the faith, that he was soon known as the "Apostle of Yorkshire." But like all the other missionary priests, then and long afterwards

<sup>1</sup> On one occasion the great surgeon, Wm. Cheselden (1688-1752), actually removed the stone from a patient in fifty-four seconds!



in England, this indefatigable labourer carried his life in his hands, and it was not to be expected that so active a priest could escape. An apostate gave information to the Earl of Huntingdon, a great enemy of "the papisticall sort," and our missionary was taken prisoner in his sleep in a house at York, provided for the entertainment of the *pastores peregrini* of the faith by a devout lady, believed to have been the martyr, Margaret Clitherow. Mr Hart soon found himself among the many recusants in durance in York Castle. The Blessed William Lacy had recently escaped from the place by letting himself down from the wall, so for greater security, the new arrival was doubly ironed and thrust into an underground dungeon. His captivity was diversified by a disputation, or rather series of disputations, on the current points of controversy, with the Dean of York, and at least several other ministers. The polemical contest commenced through the Dean denying that such doctrines as the Real Presence, Prayers for the Dead, Intercession of Saints, etc., could be proved from the works of St Augustine—a very unfortunate Father to cite for such a purpose, for the writings of this great Doctor of the Western Church literally overflow with arguments for the Catholic contention on these and other beliefs and practices disputed by the reformers.<sup>1</sup> This discussion, as usually happens, wandered off into a whole population of Fathers—St Ambrose, St Chrysostom, St Jerome, and the rest. By the time it had almost run its course, the Lent Assizes were at hand, where Mr Hart was indicted on the charge of high treason, first for having brought into the realm certain writings of the See of Rome, and, secondly, for having said Mass, heard confessions and reconciled numbers to the Faith. In the very able defence which he put forth, the accused stressed the facts that he had brought no writings from Rome, save his letters of ordination, and that the obedience which he had taught as due to the Roman Pontiff, not only detracted nothing from the allegiance owing to the secular prince, but "rather confirmed and increased it." The speech of the prisoner greatly nonplussed the court, which had to rely on the statute of Henry

<sup>1</sup> For the real and substantial presence of Our Lord in the Holy Eucharist, see, for instance, St Augustine, *De Consecrariis*, chapter 41: "We faithfully confess that before Consecration, it is bread and wine, the product of nature, but after Consecration the body and blood of Christ which the blessing consecrated."

St Augustine and Prayers for the Dead: "The prayers of the Church and of some good persons, are heard in favour of those Christians who departed this life not so bad as to be deemed unworthy of mercy, nor so good as to be entitled to immediate happiness (*The City of God*, book 21, chapter 24). Dr Johnson evidently had this passage in mind, when he defended purgatory and prayers for the dead in reply to Boswell's objection. (See Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, chapter 17). St Augustine, after asserting that Saints, by their prayers to God, assist those who invoke their intercession, adds: "God Almighty everywhere present, hearing the supplications of His Martyrs, may, by the ministry of His Angels, grant the succours that are requested (*De Cura pro mortuis gerenda*, chapter 16).

VIII, attaching the penalty of treason to any one who should leave the Kingdom without the royal consent and ask or receive assistance from the Pope. Mr Hart, with his usual ability, dealt with this objection too, so that the presiding judge, who seems to have been a very judicial-minded lawyer, frankly remarked: "Hart, I acknowledge that your intention was by no means evil, and I even admit that your desire to acquire learning and virtue was a laudable one; but as you know, in the time of Henry VIII, it was decreed that if any one should leave the realm without his Sovereign's permission, he should be accounted guilty of treason." This declaration of the state of the law on the subject was, of course, accepted by the jury, but the verdict of guilty, which at once followed his Lordship's charge, caused deep murmurings of dissatisfaction in court. The North, with its considerable Catholic population at that time, and remoteness from the immediate power of the Government, was always far less inclined to acquiesce in Court verdicts and proceedings for religion than the more Protestant, and by now, well-drilled South. The six days that passed between sentence of death and execution, were chiefly spent by Mr Hart in devotion and writing letters of exhortation to his friends, and the Catholics of the district, generally, urging them "to stand in that faith which Christ planted, the Apostles preached, the martyrs confirmed, the whole world approved and embraced; stand firm in that faith which, as it is the oldest, is also the truest and most sure, and which is in most harmony with the holy scriptures and all antiquity." The good people of York who had murmured against the sentence as unjust, showed their appreciation of the martyr by thronging round the gallows on the day of the execution (15th March, 1583), and refusing to allow the hideous butchery of the quartering, etc., to take place till after the death by hanging had supervened. This was all the more remarkable, as orders had been given that no one was to approach within forty feet of the condemned and the executioners, but the crowd broke through all barriers, and not only prevented the more horrible parts of the sentence from being carried out, as described, but also bore away many relics of the holy man, such as pieces of his clothing, and even portions of his body and blood! These precious souvenirs have unfortunately long since been lost, but the profound impression caused by his death in Rome, Rheims, and on the Continent generally, at the time, has come down to his spiritual descendants as a cherished legacy of holiness, zeal, and constancy.

[Challoner: *Memoirs*. Burton and Pollen: *Eng. Martyrs*. Lingard: *History of Eng.*, vol. vi.]

MARCH 15

MARILLAC, THE BLESSED LOUISE DE, FOUNDRRESS OF  
THE SISTERS OF CHARITY OF ST VINCENT OF PAUL

(1591-1660)

Just as it is almost impossible to think of Adam Smith without recalling the *Wealth of Nations*, or of George Stephenson, and not at once picturing the railway-engine, so the name of Louise de Marillac remains for ever associated with the Grey Sisters, those "Angels of Mercy," who ever since their formal establishment in 1633, have given to solid works of corporeal mercy a touch of the dramatic in the fever-stricken wards of hospitals, by the lowly couches of the abandoned poor, and the camp-beds of field-ambulances under the lurid light of the gun-fire. Louise de Marillac may be said to have prepared herself for her epoch-making work from her earliest years. Her father, Louis de Marillac, Seigneur de Ferrières, belonged to a family that first became known during the Hundred Years' War. By the sixteenth century its members were prominent in the official world of Paris, one, Charles, being Bishop of Vannes, and another, Guillaume, Comptroller-General of Finance. Michael de Marillac, a younger brother of Louis, father of our Foundress, was sometime Chancellor of France under Louis XIII. When Louise, who was born 12th August, 1591, was three years old, she lost her mother, Marguerite (Camus), and as her father married again, she was sent shortly afterwards to be brought up at the Dominican Convent of St Denis, at Poissy. The education here was the usual learned one of the age, including Latin and Greek, Homer being read by the young ladies in the original. Later on, Louise left the convent, and studied at home under her father, who was a scholarly man of the type of Montaigne, though happily without the easy morality that mars so much of the sentiments and speculations of that great but eccentric genius. Louise was still immersed in her reading, when her father died (1607). The natural devotion of her childhood, which had developed into a deep and earnest piety, combined with a true appreciation of the passing things of time, now made known her wish to enter the cloister as a nun among the "Daughters of the Passion." This Order, also known as "Capuchinesses," was founded in 1538 by the Ven. Maria Longo, who adopted for the purpose the primitive or strict rule of St Clare. The ringing of a bell at midnight in some places to remind the wakeful of praying for the holy souls, is said to have originated with this foundation. Père H. de Champagny, the Confessor of the would-be novice, however, advised her to choose the married state, and in February, 1613, she became

the wife of Monsieur Antoine Le Gras, secretary to Marie de Medici, the widowed Queen of Henri Quatre. Louise proved herself an excellent wife and mother. Well read herself, she paid special attention to the education of her little son, Michael-Antoine, proving that in this, as in so much else, she was a true imitator of Queen Blanche, to whose fostering care no small part of the holiness of St Louis IX of France was due. Moreover, the phases and general experience of domestic and family life gave the future Foundress of the great Order of Charity an insight into the conditions and needs of corporeal suffering which, humanly speaking, the secluded routine of the cloister could not have afforded. She was untiring in works of charity, and this happy side of her great character was powerfully developed by the holy friendship and wise advice of St Francis of Sales and the saintly Bishop of Belley, Mgr Le Camus. Her husband, after a long and painful illness, died a holy death on 21st December, 1625, and his widow—now by a curious contemporary usage styled “Mdlle Le Gras!”<sup>1</sup>—resolved not to remarry, but to devote the remainder of her life to works of Catholic beneficence. The horrifying “religious” wars of the preceding century had brought in their train a whole host of appalling evils. Towns which had enormously increased in size, owing to the long insecurity of country life, were in many districts hotbeds of vice and notorious for cynical unbelief. Devil-worship was secretly rife in Paris in addition to the open scandals and immoralities which had, indeed, almost ceased to attract attention. The feuds and enmities engendered by the long Huguenot<sup>2</sup> strife had also given a terrible impetus to duelling, so that in the course of eighteen years no less than four thousand noblemen and gentlemen are said to have lost their lives in these misnamed “affairs of honour.”<sup>3</sup> Joined to this shocking condition of things was the perhaps even more reprehensible decadence of the clergy. Many of these were mere courtly Abbés, thinking of little, apparently, but idle, and often sinful, amusements and the rich preferments that family influence might produce. Numbers of the parish priests neglected their flocks, allowed the churches to fall into decay, and seemed in many instances to have almost forgotten what their sacred calling meant! But happily the era of real reform was about to begin. The iron hand of Richelieu checked for a whole epoch the blood-stained madness of the duello.<sup>3</sup> The writings of St Francis de Sales, sweet and fragrant with all

<sup>1</sup> The title Madame was at that time almost exclusively reserved for wives of the nobility.

<sup>2</sup> Georges Duruy, *Histoire Populaire de la France*. (Paris: Hachette.) For the depraved condition of Paris at this time, see Edward Healy Thompson's *Life of M. Olier*, especially chapter x. (London: Burns & Lambert, 1861.)

<sup>3</sup> The severe edict of Louis XIII against duelling—dictated, of course, by the Cardinal—appeared in 1626, and next year, two notorious duellists, the Count de Boutteville, of the ancient family of de Montmorency, and his adversary, both of whom, out of bravado, had fought each

the flowers of devotion, were being widely read and acted upon. St Vincent of Paul's holy example and tireless exhortations and epistles were stirring the whole hierarchy "to walk worthy of the vocation in which you are called." (*Ephes.*, iv. 1). Monsieur Olier was about to inaugurate the famous seminary and "Sulpician Method" that were to make the Clergy of France the model to their brethren throughout the world. The golden age of the illustrious Church of Charlmagne and St Louis, Bossuet and Fénelon was about to dawn. In this happy amelioration the subject of this notice was to play, what may be termed, a mighty part.

Shortly after the commencement of her widowhood, Madame, or as we must call her by the then usage, Mdlle Le Gras, offered herself as a helper in his good works to St Vincent of Paul. It was the meeting of two kindred spirits, and realizing with joy her love for the sick and the poor generally, "Monsieur Vincent," as the future Saint was popularly called, prudently and gradually associated her in various of his pious undertakings, notably the "Confrérie de la Charité," a society of devout ladies of rank and young women, the latter chiefly from the country, who dedicated themselves to the manifold works of active charity demanded by the conditions of city poverty, sickness, and sin. The Society met every Sunday for a religious discourse and to receive practical advice from St Vincent, and so widely did the confraternity spread, that in November, 1633, Louise de Marillac (or Le Gras) began to give systematic instruction to the members in nursing and all matters relating to the sick and distressed generally. This is regarded as the real beginning of the "Sisters of Charity"—which work, like "a snowball," as St Vincent used playfully to term the sisterhood, soon grew to great size. For about a dozen years, St Vincent and Louise de Marillac continued to act as sort of joint "superiors" of the organization, but there was no thought of starting a regular "Order." The pious women who belonged to the Confrérie were simply charitable souls engaged in works of spiritual and temporal mercy, "having no cloister but the fear of God, no religious habit but holy modesty." But the very triumph of the movement demanded a change. Nursing in hospitals, rescuing foundlings and orphans, attending on the sick poor in their own homes, visiting the prisons—to mention but a few of the labours—are not matters that can be efficiently carried out just casually or by amateurs! So after about a year of organized training of some of the ladies in her own house, probably in the Rue de Fossé St Victor, Louise, with the approval of her director, St Vincent, solemnly bound herself on 25th March, 1634, to devote her life to works of charity. Other Sisters

other openly in Paris, were condemned to death and executed. It was the first warning of the grim policy which was so soon to envelop France beneath the Red Robe! The edict of Louis XIII was renewed with even greater stringency by his son, Louis XIV, in 1679.

were later led to follow her example, and in May, 1636, a larger convent was opened in a house, known as "La Chapelle St Denis," near the residence of the Lazarist Fathers, of which St Vincent was the Founder and first Superior. In 1641, another house opposite St Lazarre itself was taken, and it remained the Mother-House of the Sisters of Charity down to the time of the Revolution. It was there that the first Sisters made their simple vows and binding only for a year, each promising "to apply myself all this year to the corporeal and spiritual service of the sick poor, our true masters, with the help of God, which I ask through His Son, Jesus Crucified, and by the prayers of the Blessed Virgin. Signed — — —" During the selfish and almost purposeless Civil War known as "The Fronde" (1648-52), Louise de Marillac and her Sisters opened soup kitchens in Paris—probably the first of the kind to be started—and daily fed many hundreds, if not thousands, of persons rendered destitute by the internecine struggle. It was about this period, too, that the Sisters of Charity had their first experience of warfare, not in France, but at the siege of Varsovia in Poland, where some of their number had been sent at the request of the Queen of that country, Louise Marie, for the purpose of founding convents and hospitals. In all these labours this truly valiant woman was untiring, and her wonderful spirit of courage and hope not only animated her Sisters during her life, but it seems to have descended to the Order, and remained with it ever since. By 1659, the year before her death and that of the great spiritual Father of this mighty crusade of never-failing mercy, St Vincent, there were in France no less than forty houses. At the time of the Revolution (1789), these had increased to 426. Apart from expulsion and spoliation, the Sisters appear to have suffered little else from the Jacobin Terrorists, the enormous popularity of the foundation, owing to its vast services to afflicted humanity, saving the Religious from many of the worse persecutions that befell the rest of the Orders in France.<sup>1</sup> The vast increase of the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity since the beginning of the nineteenth century is one of the many phenomena of the Catholic world.

The life of such a personage as Louise de Marillac is so entwined with her work, that it is not easy to dissociate the two. It was chiefly in her conferences to her spiritual daughters that she revealed her innermost soul. We can give but three short passages from these and, though the examples be but brief, they will serve to illustrate the deep spirituality of

<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, Sœur Fontaine and three other Sisters of Charity were guillotined at Cambrai, 1794, for which see under June 26.

The Sisters of Charity were restored in France by a joint-decree of the Three Consuls, Napoleon, Cambacères, and Lébrun (1801) authorising the last superior, "The Citizeness, Deleau," to commence the work of reorganizing the beneficent labours of the congregation. Large premises were bestowed on the Sisters in the Rue de Bac, Paris, as the centre of their work.

this great and generous woman. Thus, speaking on "Vocation," she once said: "We should put our vocation, in so far as it concerns us, before all others, being persuaded that God has called us to it for our greater good, and possibly as the sole means of our salvation. We should be satisfied with the practices that it enjoins, and look upon the desire to undertake others, even though they should, in appearance, seem perfect, as a dangerous temptation!" With regard to "Vows," her words are no less remarkable. "The origin of vows," she observed, "is found in the death of our Saviour on the Cross, by which He entirely discharged our debt to the Divine Justice. It is a result of the promise He made figuratively when He said: 'And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all things to myself!' Is not this promise, O my God, literally fulfilled in all those to whom Thou givest the grace of binding themselves by vows? For what remains to him who has made them? Nothing whatever except to belong to Thee by right of possession. . . . Thus all the actions of a person who has consecrated himself to Thee, belongs to Thee."

Again: "The disposition of a soul which accepts with holy indifference whatever God wills in her regard, is truly angelic, because the angels in Heaven, destined to the guardianship of souls, await peacefully God's orders—it being the same to them if they are employed in Heaven for the accidental glory of the Blessed, or in Purgatory for the consolation of the souls who suffer there, or on earth in order to communicate the holy inspirations that are necessary to men for their salvation."

The reader will not be surprised to learn that one who had such compassion for the suffering members of Christ's mystical body, was ever filled with a deep devotion to the Sacred Passion. Every Friday, and during Lent, every day, she meditated for one hour on the sorrowful mysteries, repeating frequently the words: "Christ was made obedient for us unto death, even unto the death of the Cross." Herself no mean artist, she sent St Vincent, the very year that was to see the deaths of them both (1660), a picture of Our Lord crowned with thorns, which she had painted specially for his oratory. Her own last illness, a fever and painful inflammation brought on by a fall, began the next month, February. By March, ulceration and gangrene had supervened, and on the twelfth of that month she received the sacred Viaticum for the second time. At the conclusion, the holy Foundress sent her last blessing to all her daughters in the Lord, praying "that He may give you the grace of persevering in your vocation in order to serve Him in the manner He asks of you." To the Duchess of Ventadour, and the many pious persons, religious and lay, who came to see her, she spoke words of spiritual comfort. Her holy and peaceful death occurred on 15th March, 1660, just after she had received the Apostolic Benediction. Buried in the Chapel of the Visitation in the

Church of St Lawrence, her venerated remains were removed nearly a century later (1755) to the Convent Chapel in the Rue St Martin. They repose now in the House of the Sisters, Rue du Bac. St Vincent himself, who had been her Co-founder in the work of the great Sisterhood of Charity, followed her to the grave on 27th September of the same year.

The process of the Canonization of Louise de Marillac did not begin till 1886, when Cardinal Richard, Archbishop of Paris, caused the evidence to be collected and forwarded to Rome. On 10th June, 1895, Leo XIII signed the document that gave her the title of Venerable. His next successor but one, Benedict XV, solemnly declared her Blessed, 9th May, 1920, so the time may not be far distant when this great ornament of religion and benefactress of the world, will be honoured on the altars of the Church as one of the most remarkable of the Saints.

[*Life of the Venerable Louise de Marillac (Mademoiselle Le Gras), Foundress of the Company of Sisters of Charity of St Vincent de Paul*, by Alice Lady Lovat. Preface by Father Bernard Vaughan, S.J. (Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent & Co. Ltd., London, E.C.).]

## MARCH 16

BLESSED ROBERT DALBY, AND BLESSED JOHN  
AMIAS (OR ANN), PRIESTS, MARTYRS  
(?-1589). Beatified Dec. 15, 1929.

THE particulars that have come down to us concerning the Blessed Robert Dalby are of a somewhat meagre character. He is described as a native of Hemingbrough in the Archdiocese of York, and to have been originally a Protestant. It is also gathered that his former life was probably wayward, for it is said that having been warned by a Catholic of the dangerous state of his soul, he was seized with a sudden terror or remorse, and even attempted to commit suicide. The wound, however, was not mortal. Like Lord Clive, much later and in a vastly different sphere, he was "reserved for something great!" While recovering from the effects of his rash act, he had full time further to consider spiritual matters, and having been reconciled to the Church, he resolved to devote himself to the priesthood. He crossed to Rheims, where he was ordained, 1588. Having been a minister before his conversion (*Cath. Record Socy.*, vol viii, p. 105 n.), he returned to the north, landing at Scarborough, but his labours for souls do not appear to have been very protracted, for according to the *Catholic Record Society*, vol. v., p. 192, he was seized at Medding on Palm



Sunday evening and committed to York Castle.<sup>1</sup> Among the Catholic prisoners there at that time, for religion, was a priest, the Ven. Edward Burden, who, when he saw Mr Dalby going to his trial at the Assizes, exclaimed: "Shall I always lie here like a beast while my brother hastens to his reward? Truly, I am unworthy of such glory as to suffer for Christ." The two priests, Dalby and Amias, were both condemned to death for having been "ordained by the authority of the See of Rome," and having "returned into England and exercised there their priestly functions for the benefit of the souls of their neighbours" (Challoner). The Martyrdom, on 16th March, 1589, is narrated under the following:—

BLESSED JOHN AMIAS.—The family of this fellow-sufferer with the Blessed Robert Dalby is stated to be the Anns of Frickley, Hooton Pagnell, West Riding of Yorkshire. No doubt, the origin D'Anne, is Norman, since the noble house of Montmorency in France, which played such a dramatic part in the reigns of Henry II and Louis XIII, is said to have sprung from the same stock.<sup>2</sup>

Fr. Pollen states that the Blessed John Amias was born near Wakefield, and that he was for a time engaged in the cloth trade, was married and had a large family. After his wife's death he settled his property on the children and went to Douay to train for the priesthood. In the Douay list of students for 1577 his name appears as "Jon. Amias." Part of his studies were made at Rheims, 1580-81, and on 28th March of the last year, he was ordained by Monseigneur Cosmé Clause de Marchaumont, Bishop of Chalons. He said his first Mass in the Chapel of St Stephen at Rheims, and in June following came to England with the Ven. Edmund Sykes. The details of his sacerdotal career up to his arrest appear to be quite obscure. Even the accounts of the circumstances of his seizure are somewhat contradictory, the *Catholic Record Society* entry (vol. v., p. 192) stating that he was taken with the Ven. Robt. Dalby at Medding, while Fr. Pollen's narrative has it that he was "arrested at Mr Murton's house in Lancashire."<sup>3</sup>

In death, at least, these two devoted missionaries were not divided! On 16th March, 1589, following conviction at the York Lent Assizes,

<sup>1</sup> Fr. Pollen in *The Venerable Martyrs of England*, says he was arrested at Scarborough. See next notice (Ven. John Amias).

<sup>2</sup> Henry de Montmorency, grandson of Anne de Montmorency, Constable of France, was beheaded for leading a rebellion against the government of Cardinal Richelieu, 1632. With him died the last direct descendant of the noble house of Montmorency. See Brewer's *Political, Social and Literary History of France*.

<sup>3</sup> "Anno, 1589—Mr Amias and Mr Doberley, Priests, martyred 15th March. They were taken at Medding upon Palm Sunday even." *Cath. Rec. Socy.*, v., p. 192. Is Medding a misprint for Murton's, i.e., Mr Murton's house?

for their priesthood, both martyrs were drawn on hurdles to about the distance of a mile outside York, and having arrived at the gallows, Mr Amias went up to it and kissed it. He then addressed the people, emphasizing the fact that the cause of his and his companion's death was not treason, but religion (Challoner). He seems to have been allowed to hang until he was dead before the dismembering was proceeded with. Among those who witnessed the deaths of these two valiant champions of the faith was Anthony Champney, D.D. (Sorbonne), sometime rector of the English College at Arras, who late in life became a Canon of the Old Chapter of the Bishop of Chalcedon, first English Vicar-Apostolic. While Mr Amias was being dispatched, Mr Dalby remained engaged in prayer till his turn came. The Sheriff's men were very careful to see that no one carried away any relics of the martyrs, yet, notwithstanding their vigilance, a gentlewoman did make her way through the crowd and got near enough to the bodies to reverence them, which action gave rise to a considerable tumult. It is reported further, that a malefactor who was confined in York Castle saw, the night before the martyrdom, a mysterious light around the two priests who were to die next day, and was so affected by the sight that he forthwith sought for and obtained reconciliation with the Church.

*N.B.*—Dame Elizabeth Anselma Anne (1715-94), third daughter of Marmaduke Anne, Esq., of Frickley Hall, Yorkshire, entered the Benedictine Abbey of Our Lady of Consolation, Cambrai, and was professed, 1735. She died in the prison of Compiègne, 21st January, 1794, during the Reign of Terror, a worthy successor of her martyred collateral ancestor, the Blessed John Amias, or Anne. See the Carmelite Nuns, Martyrs of Compiègne, under July 16.

[Burton and Pollen: *Eng. Martyrs*. Challoner: *Memoirs. Cath. Record Society*, vols. v. and viii. Gillow: *Bibliog. Dic. Eng. Caths.*]

MARCH 23

ST JOSEPH ORIOL

(1650-1702)

THIS great Saint, known in Spain as the "Thaumaturge of Barcelona," was born in that city, 23rd November, 1650. His father, Juan Oriol, was a master velvet-maker, and his mother, Gertrude Boguna, the descendant of an ancient but decayed family, which, as far back as 1407, is mentioned in deeds relating to the Monastery of Pedralbes.<sup>1</sup> The little

<sup>1</sup> Guillermo Boguna was Syndic (Sindico) of Tarrasa that year.

son of Juan and Gertrude Oriol was baptized the same day as his birth, in the parish church of San Pedro de las Puellas, his sponsors being Anthony Morell, M.D., and Senora Maria Puigvenlos, wife of one of the leading merchants of Barcelona.

When our Saint was very young, he had the misfortune to lose his good father. After two or three years of widowhood, his mother married Dominic Pujolar, a well-to-do shoemaker and widower with a family. Already little José was remarkable for a wonderful devotion, and in the parish church of his new home, that of Santa Maria del Mar, he soon began to attract the attention of the good Fathers, who were naturally interested in a boy who seemed to be so full of the Grace of God. The statue of Our Lady in the Church was the little boy's great spiritual joy, and this venerable image is pointed out to-day as an object of special veneration as the shrine where the Saint as a child prayed so long and fervently.

After receiving the rudiments of a classical education, José entered the University of Barcelona on 9th September, 1664, at the very early age of fourteen. Spanish Universities, like those of Scotland at that time, appear to have combined the functions of a high school and a university. Oriol studied hard, not only because it was his duty to acquire knowledge, but because he recognized that not merely idleness, but even a want of response on the part of the pupil, inflicts much hardship on the professor. He was diligent in all his religious duties, hearing Mass daily, reciting the rosary, and extending, in fact, all the pious practices of his childhood. Though it is believed that he never committed a serious fault, he yet practised the greatest austerities frequently, as if his years had been spent in waywardness and forgetfulness of God! After he had been at the University about four years, José became conscious of a vocation to the priesthood. He did not act impulsively, but took counsel of his confessor and, like the young Samuel, made the matter a subject of much prayer. Having resolved upon the step he received the tonsure and two minor orders on the 20th and 21st December, 1669, and the last two on 31st May, 1670, all being conferred by Ildefonso de Sotomayor, Bishop of Barcelona. The priesthood was not received till 30th May, 1676, the ordination taking place in the Chapel of the Convent of Santa Clara at Vich. For some time after his ordination, the young priest, who was now a Doctor of Divinity, acted as tutor to the sons of Don Thomas de Gasneri, a Major-general in the Army of King Carlos II, but the time not given to tuition was spent in hearing confessions in the Church of the Oratory of St Philip Neri at Barcelona, and also as confessor to several convents, including that of Los Angeles, and the Magdalen Penitentiary. Not long after the death of his excellent mother, in 1686, our Saint made a pilgrimage of devotion to Rome, taking with him little else besides his

breviary, a crucifix and some letters of recommendation from the Bishop of Barcelona. Pope Innocent XI, though esteemed somewhat severe, and a Pontiff by no means overgiven to granting favours, was pleased to confer on the holy pilgrim—the fame of whose apostolic life had preceded him—a small benefice, that of the Church of Nuestra Senora del Pino in Barcelona. As priest of this Church, Fr. Joseph Oriol—to give him the familiar modern English priestly title—soon displayed all the virtues we recall in connection with the life of the St Curé d'Ars. He slept little, devoting most of the night to prayer and penance, and when he celebrated holy Mass all present felt awed by his devotion. For hours daily his confessional was not merely frequented but besieged by all kinds of persons, for the advice he gave seemed in every case to be no mere conventionally pious counsel, but a gleam of light from above! But just as the holy Curé of Ars longed for solitude to “weep over his poor sins!” so our Saint seems to have ever had before his eyes the desire of giving his life for the conversion of the heathen. The icy deserts of Siberia, or the then almost hermetically-sealed Empire of Japan, were each the objects of his solicitude. On the 31st March, 1698, he caused his will to be drawn up by Antonio Navarro, a notary of Barcelona, and having disposed of such small worldly property as he possessed—chiefly objects of piety and books—to such friends as Thomas Milans and Jeronima Llobet, his relatives, he started for Rome again, in the garb of a pilgrim and with the intention of placing himself at the disposal of propaganda for foreign missionary work. But man proposes! After reaching Marseilles, the would-be disciple of St Francis Xavier was seized with a mysterious malady of the fever kind, which seemed to increase every time he attempted to resume his journey. In all his devotions, our Saint appears to have poured himself forth as it were to Our Lord, as if he were standing in His divine presence and were asking for some greatly-desired favour. There was no aloofness in his prayers. It was a case again like that of St Paul: “I live now, not I, but Christ liveth in me.” Don José took this malady to mean that Barcelona was to be his mission-field. He had zealously tried to do God’s will where he thought it lay, but it was not evidently so, and by 1699, he had returned to the former scene of his labours. The complete victory of the Saint over himself, not only in the many crosses and disappointments of his life, but especially in this great and humiliating trial of what may be called his abortive missionary attempt, was now about to be rewarded. The record of the four years that were to pass from this time till his holy death reads like the history of some anchorite of the Thebaid, or wonder-worker of the Apostolic Age. We find the following miracles set down as having been wrought through the instrumentality of our Saint: (1) A dead child restored to life, the

circumstances duly verified by Antonio Navarro, notary, and Francis Bertran. (2) A dumb child, the son of a knight, cured after the Saint had made the sign of the Cross over his mouth. (3) Maria Estrada, daughter of a carpenter, cured of deafness by the Saint. Jeronima Corts, cured of a bad stammer and so enable to become a nun. (4) Maria Angela Ballesca cured of apoplexy. (5) Juan Sala of Barcelona cured of a painful disease. These are only a very few instances of the miraculous incidents attributed to the Saint, and which gave him even during his life the name of the "Wonder-worker of Barcelona."

Ever since his illness at Marseilles, the health of Don José had been in a state of decline, but he pursued his daily round of prayer and spiritual administration in the confessional, the hospitals and penitentiaries of the city, as if nothing was the matter. On the 7th of March, 1702, he recited Vespers as usual in the Church of the "Pino," and then returned to the house of his great friend, Isidro Llobet, where he lodged. That evening he was taken very ill with pleurisy, the doctor said, and the Holy Viaticum was administered, the Blessed Sacrament being carried to the sick Saint accompanied by a great procession of clergy and leading citizens. He received the Extreme Unction on the 22nd of the same month. Prayers were recited for the recovery of "Our Saint" all over the city, and the Blessed Sacrament was exposed for the same end in all the churches. But Don José had foretold that his end had come, that his work for souls was now over, and he departed this life peacefully on the morning of 23rd March, 1702. His venerated remains were interred within the Chapel of San Leopardo in the Church of Our Lady del Pino the next day. An elegant Latin inscription reminds all readers that one adorned with such virtues and illustrious for such miracles is not really dead, but lives always by example and memory. Devotion to the deceased increased in Spain all during the eighteenth century, and Pius VI declared that Joseph Oriol had practised virtues to an heroic degree. On the 5th of September, 1806, Pius VII declared the Venerable Servant of God Blessed, an event which was followed by a great outburst of religious enthusiasm in Barcelona and all Catalonia, notwithstanding the fact that the nation was approaching the crises that led up to the Peninsular War. In November, 1896, Cardinal Casanas, on behalf of the Royal Family, the Hierarchy, and many public bodies of Spain, petitioned Leo XIII for the Canonization of the Blessed José, an event which thirteen years later was celebrated at St Peter's under Pius X, 20th May, 1909.

[*Vida de San José Oriol, Escrita en Catalan con Motivo de Su Canonizacion*, Por Sor Ma Eulalia Anzizu. (Barcelona : "La Hormiga de Oro," 1928).]

MARCH 25

CLITHEROW, THE BLESSED MARGARET, MARTYR<sup>1</sup>(1555<sup>2</sup>-1586). Beatified Dec. 15, 1929.

MARGARET CLITHEROW, whose name stands forth in glorious relief among the Catholic sufferers under Elizabeth, was the daughter of Thomas Middleton, Sheriff of York, where she was born, about 1555 or 1556. Her father died when she was very young, leaving as a legacy to his little daughter a silver goblet and six silver spoons. In July, 1571, Margaret married John Clitherow, a rich butcher and City Chamberlain, who lived in a house in the "Shambles," a street which still remains as one of the "bits" of old York. About 1574, Mrs Clitherow was converted to the Catholic faith, mainly, it seems, through reading, for she had hitherto been brought up so strictly in the established Protestant religion as not "to suspect that there was any other way to serve God!" After her conversion she began not only to lead a life of extraordinary holiness and mortification, but, full of zeal for the ancient Faith, she gave systematic hospitality to the priests who came to York to minister to and encourage the many Catholics in and about the city. Her husband, though himself a Protestant, was very friendly to his wife's religion, for he had two brothers Catholics, one of them, William, being a priest. Like Queen Henrietta Maria, nearly sixty years later, Margaret Clitherow had a great devotion to those who had given their lives for the old religion, and she used to make a sort of pilgrimage, from time to time, to the York Tyburn, and pray openly beneath the "tree" that had been the door to Heaven for so many holy martyrs. This and her persistent absence from the Parish Church at length brought her under the notice of the civil authorities, as early as 1576. She was committed to prison, but after some two years was permitted to return home on bail. In March, 1586, her house was raided by the priest-hunters, and a Flemish servant boy, under threats of violence, showed the pursuivants a secret hiding-place where a chalice, vestments and other "massing stuffe" were concealed. Margaret was at once re-arrested, and committed for trial at the York Lent Assizes, then just opening. The indictment against her was that she had harboured priests, which, by 16th Eliz., was felony without benefit of clergy. At the trial at Bar, before Justices Clinch and Rhodes, 14th March, four days after her committal, Margaret refused to plead, as she did not wish her own children and servants—the only witnesses for the Crown—to testify against her. After a lengthy adjournment to give her time to alter her mind, the judges were compelled by the then state of the law to order

<sup>1</sup> Spelt also, Clitheroe and Clitherou, in some old records.

the prisoner to be subjected to the *Peine forte et dure*, or slow pressing to death under a heavily weighted board.<sup>1</sup> This was the penalty which, since the reign of Henry IV, at least, was inflicted on those who refused to plead either way to an indictment for treason or felony. Margaret, though probably pregnant at the time, endured her horrible death at the Tolbooth Prison, York, with the utmost fortitude, 25th March, according to the old style, and Good Friday by the new. Among her last words were: "God be thanked I am not worthy of so good a death as this!" She prayed "especially for Elizabeth, Queen of England, that God [might] turn her to the Catholic Faith, and that after this mortal life she might receive the blessed joys of heaven!" The body of Margaret Clitherow after being cast away, was rescued, incorrupt, by the faithful, but unfortunately its place of burial has long been lost. A hand, much shrivelled, but still intact, is preserved as a sacred relic in the Bar Convent, York, and some of her hair at the Archbishop's House, Westminster. Of Margaret Clitherow's children, William and Henry became priests at Douay, while a daughter, Anne, entered the Convent of St Ursula, Louvain. The husband, Mr John Clitherow, was, according to Challoner, "forced into banishment."

[Burton and Pollen: *Lives of the Eng. Martyrs*, vol. i. Dom Bede Camm, *do.* A *MS. Life*, by her confessor, the Rev. John Mush, printed in Fr. Morris's *Troubles of Our Catholic Forefathers*. The Rev. J. Mush died at an advanced age, 1617.]

MARCH 25

BIRD, THE BLESSED JAMES, MARTYR

(?—1593). Beatified Dec. 15, 1929.

SOME of the records of the English martyrs relate that this young sufferer for the Catholic faith, was but nineteen years of age at the time of his death. That this statement is incorrect, appears from the short report of the trial as given by Fr. Henry Garnet (Stonyhurst MSS., Anglia, i. n. 73, p. 149), where Bird is described as a "recusant," and as having "been almost continuously in custody full ten years for this offence, and having become acquainted with wellnigh every prison in London." All accounts, however, agree that he was a native of Winchester, where his father held municipal office, and that he was early reconciled to the Church. Both

<sup>1</sup> The last instance of the "Peine" being carried out, was at the Cambridge Assizes, 1741. The Act of 1772 ordered a person who refused to plead to be adjudged guilty and sentenced accordingly. The Statute of 1828 directs that in the case of a prisoner refusing to plead (unless insane), a plea of not guilty is to be taken, and the trial to proceed in the ordinary way.

his parents were Protestants, and it is very probable that their son studied at Winchester School. After becoming a Catholic, young Bird went to Rheims, apparently for the purpose of studying for the priesthood, but left without having taken holy orders. The cause of this step does not appear, but after his return to England he showed great zeal for the ancient faith, and was, in consequence, more than once arrested. If Fr. Garnet's statement referred to, be correct, the last seizure must have been in or about 1582 or 1583, and the place was at Mr Jerome Hethe's house. This gentleman is described as late a "Citizen of Bruxelles," and he may have been a relative of the deprived Archbishop of York, and also a member of the family of Hethe of Petersfield. The priest-hunters, it seems, were really after a much more important quarry, Fr. H. Garnet, sometime Provincial of the Jesuits in England.<sup>1</sup> But it was all fish that came to the pursuivants' net, and so young Mr Bird was taken as next best substitute for the famous Jesuit. From the latter's statement that Bird had been "almost continuously in custody" for ten years, it is to be gathered that the young man had been at liberty for some time when thus accidentally captured. He was brought up for trial at the Winchester Lent Assizes, 1592, before Sir Edmund Anderson, Lord Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, a great upholder of the Burleigh-Walsingham policy, and, consequently, a sworn foe of the Catholics. His Lordship's charge to the jury, which was characteristic, ran as follows: "Here you have John [James] Bird, a recusant. You know what a recusant means? A recusant is one who refuses to go to church. This no one does, except those who have been reconciled to the Church of Rome; but he that is reconciled to the Church of Rome is a rebel and a traitor. Now you know what you have to do." After the inevitable verdict of guilty and sentence of death, Mr Bird was kept long in prison, and once when led out to execution and then brought back again, he showed manifest signs of grief at the respite. He had his desire on 25th March, 1593, the feast of the Annunciation of Our Lady, when he was taken to the place of execution "cauled Bardiche," and there hanged, drawn and quartered, according to sentence. Before being cast off the ladder, the Martyr had this remarkable dialogue with the Sheriff:

BIRD: "I beg you, Mr Sheriff, seeing that I am a native of this city, that you would grant me one favour before I die."

SHERIFF: "What favour?"

BIRD: "Tell me what I am to die for."

SHERIFF: "I know not. You received the death-sentence in the presence of the Judge. Who can know better than you the reason for which you were condemned?"

<sup>1</sup> From 1587 till his death 1606, for his alleged share in the Gunpowder Plot of the preceding year.



BIRD: "Nay, I don't understand it at all."

SHERIFF: "Come now, confess your crime. Promise to go to church, and the Queen's pardon will be begged for you."

BIRD: "Right heartily do I thank thee! If by going to the church I can save my life, surely all the world will see this that I am executed solely for faith and religion and for nothing else. It was just this that I wished to elicit from you. Now, I gladly die!"

The head of James Bird was set upon a pole over one of the gates of the City, and it is said that his aged father in passing it by one day, exclaimed: "Ah, my son, Jemmy, who not only living wast ever obedient and dutiful, but now also when dead payest reverence to thy father! How far from thy heart was all affection or will for treason, or any other wickedness!"

[Challoner: *Memoirs*. Gillow: *Bibliographical Dictionary of the English Catholics*, vol. i. *Cath. Record Society*, vol. v. Fosse: *Judges of England*.]

MARCH 26

## ST BERNARDINE OF FOSSA

(1420-1503)

So-CALLED from the place of his birth, the town of Fossa, in the diocese of Aquila, Italy. He was a scion of the noble house of Amici, and from having so long lived and ultimately having died at the town of Aquila, is often styled in Latin notices of him, Bernardinus Aquilinus. After studying the Civil and Canon Law at Perugia, he received there in March, 1445, the habit of St Francis from the great preacher of the Order, St James of the Marches, who was then giving what would now be called "a mission" in the city, and exhorting numerous congregations to do penance.<sup>1</sup> The mantle of St James seems to have fallen upon Bernardine, who, after having attained to great perfection in the religious life, preached zealously in many parts of Italy, and later on in Dalmatia and Bosnia as well. His efforts for souls were crowned with much success, and allowing

<sup>1</sup> St James of the Marches, Fra James Gangala, O.S.F. (1391-1476). Famous for his sanctity and great influence as a preacher of penance to sinners and of the faith to heretics. His persuasion did much to reconcile the moderate Hussites to the Church at the Council of Basle (1431), and the Greeks at the Council of Florence (1439-40). Among his numerous learned and devotional writings—many of which still remain in manuscript—is the valuable *Regula Confitendi Peccata*, long used as a guide for confessors. St James also propounded the curious theory that the Precious Blood of Christ was not united to the Divinity during the three days in the Sepulchre, a statement which led to much theological discussion. St James of the Marches, who was canonized by Benedict XIII, 1726, lies buried in the Church of S. Maria la Nuova at Naples.

for the emotion and excitement often aroused in the southern temperament on these occasions, the net result of the several courses was seen in a great and permanent change for the better in the lives of very many persons. It was with great difficulty and by dint of much entreaty that Fra Bernardine escaped being made Bishop of Aquila. His humility was, indeed, always a very noticeable trait in his conduct, and it was with manifest reluctance that he filled the office of Provincial of the Provinces of St Bernardine and of Dalmatia. A close student all his life, notwithstanding the many and great calls upon his time, Fr. Bernardine was able by economizing his scanty leisure, not only to lay up a great stock of theological and historical learning, but also to enrich the world by several valuable literary contributions. In addition to Sermons and the *Opuscula*, which were such a favourite form of treatise during the age in which he lived, the subject of this notice also compiled the "Annals of the Friar's Minor Observants" (*Chronica Fratrum Minorum Observantiae*). He also wrote the first biography of his patron, St Bernardine of Siena, whose holy life he had always kept before him as a model for his own. Fr. Bernardine of Fossa was canonized by Leo XII, 26th March, 1828. Among the several published notices of him may be mentioned, Luke Wadding's *Annales Minorum*, vol. xii., pp. 277-80. Hugh à Pescocostanza: *Vita del Beato Bernardino de Fossa*. Naples, 1872.

## MARCH 28

CHANEL, THE BLESSED PETER LOUIS MARY, MARTYR  
(1803-1841)

THE Blessed Peter Chanel, described by the Sacred Congregation of Rites in the process of his Canonization, as The Protomartyr of Oceania—"Oceanicæ Protomartyr"—was born at Cuet, in the department of Ain, France, 1803. A zealous priest, the Abbé Trompier, who saw in the boy the signs of vocation, prepared young Chanel for the junior seminary and aided him, generally, by his excellent example and advice. Having completed his studies, Peter Chanel was ordained priest in 1827. His first curacy was Amberieux, and he later served Crozet as its parish priest. The missionary spirit which, ever since the sixteenth century, at least, has characterized the French clergy, received about this time a great stimulus owing to the circulation in the country of accounts of the heroic life and death of the Blessed Father Francis Regis Clet, martyred in China in 1820.<sup>1</sup> Among those fired by the noble example of the holy Lazarist Missioner, was the Abbé Chanel, and in 1831 he received permission to enter the Society of Mary, or "Marists," which had been

<sup>1</sup> See Feb. 18 page 69.

founded in 1824 by the Rev. Jean Claude Colin, who had been a fellow-student with the St Curé d'Ars. In 1836, the Society received the approbation of Pope Gregory XVI, and among the areas allotted to its missionary enterprise was Oceania. This very large extent of territory had at first been entrusted by propaganda to the Society of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, but the charge proving too widespread, the western portion was formed into a Vicariate, the first Vicar-Apostolic being Bishop Pompallier.<sup>1</sup> Tonga and Wallis Islands, Futuna and Nieué were added to the Vicariate later. After taking the three usual vows before Father Colin Père Chanel went to his far-off "cure" and upon his arrival was appointed by Bishop Bataillon to Futuna—called also Horn or Allofatu. Besides the Bishop, the other missionaries who sailed with Père Chanel from Havre (24th December, 1836), were Servant, Bret, and three lay-brothers. Fr. Bret died on the voyage out. Père Chanel's field of spiritual labour was one of the group called the "Friendly Islands" by Captain Cook in 1777, probably owing to the then apparently pacific attitude of the inhabitants, who appeared to have no weapons of any kind. When our missionary took over his charge in 1837, the situation was very different. The place was distracted by civil war between various rival chiefs, while the practice of cannibalism had still further reduced the population. The religion of the natives was chiefly made up of supplications and sacrifices, mainly to placate various alleged malign gods. After mastering enough of the language to make it possible to commence the work he had in view, Père Chanel entered upon his labours, and continued them with such patience and charity as to earn for himself the title of "the kind-hearted man." At first, the ruling Prince, Niuliki, was disposed to favour the little Christian community that grew up owing to Père Chanel's ministrations, but with the fickleness characteristic of so many Orientals, he before long veered round, and began to display the greatest hostility. This policy was largely dictated by the fact that his own son, Prince Meitala, had recently "come over to Fr. Chanel," and become, apparently, a zealous supporter of the Catholic faith. The Chief Counsellor of Prince (or King) Niuliki, his Minister, Musumususu, also saw, with jealous rage, the progress of Christianity in the island, and to nip it, as it was hoped, in the bud, a plot to exterminate its followers was devised, and attempted to be put into execution on 28th April, 1841. Several local chiefs and their vassals allied themselves with the forces of Niuliki, and falling on the Christian Community, dangerously wounded many persons while asleep, and then proceeding to Père Chanel's hut, grievously mauled him with a war-club and a bayonet. Like St Elphege,

<sup>1</sup> Translated to Auckland, N.Z., 1845. Resigned, 1868. Died in France, 1870. His successor at Auckland was Bishop Thomas Croke, later Archbishop of Cashel (d. 1902).

the Archbishop of Canterbury during the Danish invasion (1012), Père Chanel consummated his martyrdom by having his head cleaved in two by an axe, the actual deliverer of the blow being the Minister, Mosumusu himself. The venerated body of the "Protomartyr of Oceania," was first interred in the place of his auspicious death, but next year, 1842, Captain Lavaux, Commander of the French Naval Station at Tahiti, caused it to be transported to France. The cause of the holy missionary was introduced at Rome in 1857, and on 17th November, 1889, the solemnities of his Beatification were celebrated in St Peter's, in the presence of the Pope, Leo XIII, and a large and brilliant Congregation. It may be of interest to add that the Catholic population of the Oceania Archipelagoes was estimated at about 9200 in 1910. Mgr Bataillon, the first Vicar-Apostolic, was succeeded by Mgr Lamaze, whose episcopate lasted till 1906, when he was followed by his coadjutor, Mgr Amand Olier—a name, indeed, of good omen!

[Mangeret: *Mgr. Bataillon et les Missions de l'Océanie Centrale.* (Lyons, 1884.) Bourdin: *Vie du Père Chanel.* (Lyons, 1867).]

## APRIL 2

JOHN PAYNE, THE BLESSED, PRIEST, MARTYR  
(?—1582)

IN the course of 1855, there was discovered in Lord Petre's house, at Ingatestone, Essex, a secret "hold" or hiding-place that had evidently been used to conceal fugitive priests during the days of persecution. Not infrequently pewter chalices, old abridged missals, small candlesticks, and other silent evidences of the Mass which mattered so much in those days, have been found in these interesting refuges, but on this occasion the only thing lighted upon was an empty trunk bearing a label inscribed in the ornate handwriting of about 1770: "For the Dowager Lady Petre at Ingatestone Hall, Essex." The box and the label show that the hiding-place had been—characteristically enough—used in the preceding century as a lumber room, and afterwards, no doubt, shut up and forgotten.<sup>1</sup> But the secret recess had undoubtedly sheltered the Rev. John Payne, who was sometime chaplain to the Petre family during 1577, and again in 1579. Of this blessed martyr's early history, there is not much extant. He is said to have been born in the diocese of Peterborough, but it is not known whether he was ever at either Oxford or Cambridge. He went to Douay College with twelve other students in 1574, and was ordained there, 7th April, 1576. From this it may be inferred that he

<sup>1</sup> *The Catholic Handbook of London*, 1857. (Burns & Lambert.)

was already well advanced in classical and theological study, or else a much longer course would, no doubt, have been required before sending him forth to contend with "the hereticks" of Elizabethan England. Before coming on the mission in June of the same year, Mr Payne made the "Spiritual Exercises" with the Jesuit Fathers, and then set forth in company with a Mr Godsalue. This latter priest after several years on the mission, and a bitter experience of imprisonment and torture for the faith, was exiled, and died at Paris. In the account given of the Blessed Cuthbert Mayne, the protomartyr of Douay, some particulars have been afforded of the consternation caused in this country by the initial missionary activity of the priests of that College. The Rev. John Payne arrived in the midst of the mingled rage, terror and surprise that filled the minds of "the hereticks" at the number of reconciliations that were daily taking place among the nobility, gentry and the commoner sort. The search for "Romish Priestes and Jesuites," though the latter had not as yet come on the English mission, became very hot, and in January, 1577, the Rev. John Payne was arrested at Lady Petre's. The Petres were then high in influence at the English Court. Sir William Petre—the peerage was not conferred till 1603—had been one of Henry VIII's Visitors and Commissioners for the disposal of the Abbey lands, and he had also gone with the times under Edward VI and Mary. But age, and very likely remorse, brought him to consider his life and policy, and not long after the accession of Elizabeth, he went less and less to Court. He died a Catholic, 13th January, 1572, and needless to add, his descendants have never swerved from the ancient faith. No doubt it was consideration for the services of the late knight to the Crown, that led to a lenient view being taken of his relict's chaplain, for towards the end of the same year (1577), the Rev. John Payne was released from custody, and in November was back at Douay. By Christmas, 1579, however, our priest was again at Ingatestone, where he passed as steward to "my Lady Petre." While there, he seems to have incurred the hatred of the notorious George Eliot, who was employed in the house in some menial capacity. This Eliot had a very bad record. He had stolen his employer's money, seduced a young woman, and even, so it is said, committed a murder! So to cover up his crimes he turned spy, and through his information Mr Payne was arrested in Warwickshire. He was brought before Walsingham at Greenwich, the journey of the prisoner and his captors to that royal town costing the government £12, or about £144 in present currency. The martyrdoms of the two preceding years had been much condemned by public opinion at home and abroad, so it was necessary to bring forward some other charge than that of religion in the present case. This being so, Eliot, Munday, and the other "witnesses" were undoubtedly encouraged to invent a

picturesque story about a conspiracy against the Queen and her ministers. A body of fifty assassins, armed with swords and "pocket-dagges" (*i.e.*, wheel-lock pistols) were to lay in wait for "Her Highness," "Your Honour" (Lord Burleigh), "My Lord Treasurer," and "Mr Secretary Walsingham," and a speedy "killing time" was to ensue! The Pope (Gregory XIII) was to furnish the rewards for the slaying, and furthermore it was asserted that His Holiness was prepared to declare—with a view to quieting possible troubled breasts—that the deed was "without any offence to Godward!" From what Professor Meyer has lately told us of that Pontiff's private opinion as to "extreme measures," with reference to the "English Jezabel," we can well believe that no great papal condemnation would have followed any such dramatic "removal" of the Tudor Queen, as the one just detailed. But, in fact, the whole story of this plot was an infamous fabrication, so much so, indeed, that even Walsingham—one of the alleged intended "victims"—in a letter to Lord Burleigh, declared that after inquiry, he could discover nothing in it.<sup>1</sup> The Rev. John Payne lay many months in the Tower, where he was racked so barbarously that he was unable to write a repudiation of the groundless charges laid to his account by the perjured Eliot, but had to dictate his reply. In March, 1582, he was hurried out of bed, being scarcely given time to put on his cassock, and sent down to Chelmsford to answer for his life at the Essex Assizes. Eliot was, of course, the chief "witness for the Crown," and this worthy precursor of Titus Oates flaunted into Court wearing his red embroidered coat as one of the newly appointed members of the Yeoman of the Guard. Mr Payne—no counsel to address the jury being allowed persons accused of treason till 1696—made a very good defence in spite of the great disadvantage he was under, and his exposure of the infamous Eliot was worthy of Dickens's "hustling" counsel, Charles Stryver. Where State matters were involved, few juries in those days ventured to go against the Crown, and the usual verdict of "guilty" was, therefore, recorded. In exhorting the prisoner to repent, the presiding Justice, Sir Thomas Gawdy, "a very reverend judge and sage of the law," added significantly, "You may better instruct me herein."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "I have been all this day . . . set at work about the examinations of certain persons charged to have conspired to attempt somewhat against her [the Queen's] own person. But as far as I can gather by these examinations that I have already taken, I think it will prove nothing, and yet it is happy that the parties charged are taken, for that they be runagate priests, such as have been bred up in Rome and Douay, and seek to corrupt her Majesty's good subjects within this realm." Record Office: *Domestic Papers, Reign of Elizabeth*, vol. 1, pp. 49, 69.

<sup>2</sup> Sir Thomas Gawdey or Gaudy (*d* 1589), appointed Judge of the Queen's Bench, 1574. Though described as "the only favourer" of the Protestants among the Essex Justices in 1555, he was unmolested in Mary's reign during which time he was M.P. for Arundel. He was one of the Judges at the trial of the Queen of Scots at Fotheringhay, 1586.

It was usual at the executions of priests during this period, to send ministers to dispute with them either at the gallows or shortly before the fatal day. Mr Payne was much "vexed" by the "foolish babbling" of two Calvinistic divines—the established Church by 1582 had almost entirely gone over to Geneva—named Withers and Sone, and the "babbling" must have been foolish, indeed, if it was on a par with the report that was circulated among the vulgar to the effect that the condemned "was a Jesuit," and that "the Jesuits' opinion was that Christ was not God!! To counteract the evil likely to be caused by the lying rumour, Mr Payne, when at the gallows at Chelmsford, on Monday, 2nd April, 1582, "made a full declaration of his faith in the Most Holy Trinity and Incarnation." He then solemnly disclaimed any treason in act or word against the Queen, whom he had previously described in writing as always honoured by him "above any woman in the world" (Challoner). His speech, and, no doubt, his amiable character still more, seem to have made a deep impression, for the crowd would not suffer the more barbarous parts of the sentence to be carried out until the martyr was dead, and Bull, the hangman of Newgate, who officiated on this occasion, was forced to comply with the popular demand.

APRIL 4

ST ISIDORE, BISHOP OF SEVILLE

(?–636)

[For Life of this Saint, see Butler's *Lives of the Fathers, Martyrs and other Saints*, vol. i.]

APRIL 7

WALPOLE, THE BLESSED HENRY, PRIEST  
AND MARTYR

(1558–1595). Beatified Dec. 15, 1929.

EVEN the great dilettante loungeur of the eighteenth century, Horace Walpole, amidst his articles of "bigotry and virtue" at Strawberry Hill—as the wife of the famous "Railway King," George Hudson, later described these and similar "auld knick-knackets!"—liked to recall the fact that he was of the same family as the Jesuit and poet who died so tragically at York in the last decade of Elizabeth's reign. Henry Walpole, son of Christopher Walpole, Esquire, of Docking, Norfolk, and Margery Beckham, his wife, was born in 1558, the year that saw the passing

of the old religion in England. As his father was a member of Gray's Inn and a Chamber-Counsel of some distinction, and his uncle, John Walpole, a Serjeant-at-law, who, but for a comparatively early death, would have become a judge, it was resolved that the subject of this notice should join the ranks of the Bar after he had completed his classical course. This part of young Walpole's education was commenced at Norwich Grammar School, which had been recently founded by Edward VI in the old structure erected by John Salmon, Bishop of Norwich and Lord Chancellor of England under Edward II. After leaving Gonville College, Cambridge, Henry Walpole entered Gray's Inn. The Inns of Court at that time were reputed to be full of papists, and, in fact, the Reformation, as an enormous social upheaval, was like most violent changes that mean an almost total break with the past, long notoriously unpopular with the gentlemen of the robe. So the Government kept its eye on the "Innes," and from time to time, notably in 1569 and 1580, sent down Commissions to "purge them of popery." Notwithstanding this vigilance, recusants still continued to frequent the hostels of the law, and not long after becoming a member of Gray's Inn, Henry Walpole would appear to have become intimate with a number of Catholic gentlemen and through them with Father Campion. Edmund Campion, the pioneer of the Jesuit mission to this country, was a magnetic character. Wherever he went, he inspired a sort of *furor*, and despite the penal laws, numbers of educated persons, both Catholic and Protestant, not only went to hear him preach, but hung upon his words. It is said that Elizabeth herself was on one occasion among his auditors, listening to the golden-mouthed Jesuit from behind a curtain, and so carried away was even the cynical and sceptical Queen, that she secretly offered the proscribed priest the mitre of Canterbury if he would but conform. Walpole, surrounded by such influences, seems to have given himself to a serious study of the "Catholic claims." He was a great reader of books of controversy, so Challoner tells us, and while still at Gray's Inn was reconciled to the Church. No doubt Campion's *Decem Rationes*, written in Ciceronian Latin and full of cogent arguments for the old Faith, had much to do in deciding the change. The famous apologetic, on its first appearance at Oxford in June, 1581, caused a mighty stir—as in the case of almost everything else its brilliant author said or did. When Campion, on 1st December of the last-named year, paid the penalty of all this zeal, religion and genius, Walpole was among the crowd of sorrowing sympathizers that stood around Tyburn Tree. A splash of the martyr's blood as the butchery proceeded seemed to the young and grief-stricken law-student to be a direct call from God to walk in his friend's footsteps. Before proceeding to action in the matter, he put pen to paper, and the result was the magnificent poem of thirty stanzas on the "Life



and Death of the most famous Clerk and Virtuous Priest, Edmund Campion." Even if the recent tragedy of Tyburn had not set all men talking about the wonderful Jesuit, Walpole's sweet and beautiful lines would have won the recognition of all true lovers of literature. But the circumstances being what they were, the effect of the poem was electric. The Government was amazed, and then enraged and alarmed. Search was made for the daring poetic eulogizer of the priestly "rebel" and open denouncer of the bloody Burleigh-Walsingham code, but in vain. Walpole hid himself in Norfolk, but his printer and publisher, Stephen Valenger, was taken—and lost his ears! Upholding the independence of the press in those drastic days was a matter of great peril and still greater personal courage, and the Fourth Estate had its martyrs and confessors as well as the people who teach us "to live and to die."

By July, 1582, Walpole had crossed the sea and was a student of theology at Rheims, though the following April saw him in the English College, Rome, as preparatory to entering the Society of Jesus. His studies in the Society were continued at Verdun, but it was not until 17th December, 1588, that he was ordained priest at Paris, then torn by bloody conflicts between the Citizen Army of the "League" and the troops of the vacillating Henry III. Fr. Walpole, as he now was, no doubt felt glad to leave the horrible scene of dag and dagger strife for the Low Countries, where, at least, a more or less regular warfare was in progress, the belligerents being the Spanish Armies led by the Duke of Parma, and the patriots under Prince Maurice of Orange. There were many "foreign legions" serving on both sides, and a thorough army chaplain's department seems to have been organized by the Belgian Jesuits. Fr. Walpole now became a priest at the front, where he did much excellent work among the large number of his countrymen who were serving as soldiers of fortune among the dykes and canals of Holland. He was taken prisoner by the Earl of Leicester's garrison at Flushing, but after an unpleasant experience as prisoner of war in the midst of rogues and cut-throats, obtained his liberty by the golden key of a considerable ransom. We must pass over his experiences in Spain as amanuensis to the almost Napoleonic Fr. Parsons, whose *Responsio ad Elizabethæ Edictum* he translated into English. This book, which exalted the deposing power of the Pope into an article of faith, must have caused almost as much surprise in Rome as it wrought irritation in England, and, indeed, in most transalpine countries. Two years later (1593), Fr. Walpole petitioned, and successfully, to be sent to England. He had a gracious send-off from Philip II, and sailed from Dunkirk in a kind of pirate ship—a not very safe mode of transport in any case, for a passenger not only ran the imminent risk of being hung in chains if the searoving craft were taken, but the cut-throat crew not

infrequently heaved the superfluous cargo living and dead overboard in the event of a bad storm coming on, or should a pursuing vessel prove too fast a sailer ! Fr. Henry, however, his brother Thomas, and another companion, a soldier of fortune, were ultimately set a shore at Bridlington, Yorkshire (6th December), but within a few hours were arrested as suspects. In York Castle, Thomas Walpole was unbrotherly enough to tell the authorities all about his priest kinsman, but Henry, so far from being anxious to hide his real character, openly declared who and what he was, and challenged any heretical minister to dispute with him. Such an important capture could not remain local, and in February the enthusiastic Jesuit was in London and the Tower. There he was racked again and again by the brutal Topcliffe, to get from him details of the plots which it was supposed the Catholics were eternally contriving at home and abroad. Nothing, however, was obtained in the way of information, for the reason that there was nothing to be got, and in the Spring of 1595, Fr. Walpole was back at York for his trial. He was brought in guilty on 3rd April of the chief count, *i.e.*, of being a Jesuit priest and exercising his sacerdotal functions in England. He spent the time between sentence and martyrdom on the 7th in exercises of piety and in a happy serenity of mind which astonished all beholders. He suffered at York, together with the Rev. Alexander Rawlins, after reciting the Lord's Prayer and the Angelical Salutation. It was remarked that the Earl of Huntingdon, a great persecutor of the Northern Catholics, and who had been instrumental in the death of our martyr, died shortly afterwards and in great remorse, apparently. He sent for his brother, the Hon. William Hastings, a Catholic, when on his death-bed, but expired before that gentleman could reach him.

[Foley: *Records of the English Province, Society of Jesus*. Fr. John Morris: *Life of Father John Gerard*. Canon Augustus Jessop: *One Generation of a Norfolk House*.]

## APRIL 7

## OLDCORNE, S.J., THE BLESSED EDWARD, MARTYR

(1561-1606). Beatified Dec. 15, 1929.

THE father of this, one of the much discussed Jesuits associated with the Gunpowder Plot, was not a Catholic, though "suspected of papistry" as far back as 1572 (Morris: *Troubles of Our Catholic Forefathers*, Series iii., p. 352). The mother, Elizabeth, was a Catholic, and her name appears among the recusants of St Sampson's Parish in the City of York for 1598. Their son, Edward, was born in 1561, at York, and the parents, who had

some means and more ambition, were anxious that he should adopt the medical profession, a calling, the acquisition of which then and long after meant either going to one of the Universities at home or abroad, or being apprenticed to a physician or surgeon for five years. Mr Oldcorne was a bricklayer, but of the mentally superior kind, like his contemporary, "Rare" Ben Jonson, who helped to lay the bricks of the eastern wall of Lincoln's Inn, as well as lay the foundations of the modern British drama!<sup>1</sup> But after studying anatomy and physiology for a few years, Oldcorne, Junior, resolved to become a physician of the soul. One of his uncles, Thomas Oldcorne, was already a priest and labouring zealously among the Catholics in Yorkshire, and some of the adjacent counties suffering much for the Faith, being "in prisons more frequently," and running constant risk of even a more terrible fate. In 1582, Edward Oldcorne passed over to Rheims, his fellow-students there being Edward Osbaldeston, John Fettes, Edmund Arrowsmith, Christopher Bayles, Christopher Buxton, John Pibush, John Hewett, Anthony Middleton (*Cath. Record. Socy. Miscellanea*, vii.) It is not certain whether the Edmund Arrowsmith here mentioned was the martyr of 1628 or another of the same name, but John Hewett (*alias* Weldon) died for the Faith at Mile End green, 5th October, 1588, though the horrible disembowelling was specially remitted by the Queen in this case. After about five years in Rome, Oldcorne was ordained priest, August, 1587. Like many students of the English College at this time, owing, no doubt, partly to the presence and example of the Jesuit Superiors of the place, he was received into the Society of Jesus on the Feast of the Assumption, 1588, and about September following, came to England with two secular priests. The party landed in Norfolk (or Suffolk), walked inland amid much rain, and spent the night in a wood—yet "all very merry!" Next day, Oldcorne managed to get a passage on a ship bound for London, where for some time he did missionary work among the Catholics of the metropolis, but in March, 1589, F. Garnet, the Provincial, placed him as Chaplain at Hindlip Hall, Worcestershire, the seat of the ancient family of Habington (Abington or Havington). This staunch Catholic stock seems to have been torn between two loyalties. The Squire, John Habington, notwithstanding his "papistrie," was Cofferer to Queen Elizabeth.<sup>2</sup> His younger son, Thomas, the future famous antiquary, was the Queen's godson. Another son, Edward, was one of "that unfortunate band" of romantic youths

<sup>1</sup> *Lincoln's Inn: Its Ancient and Modern Buildings, with an Account of the Library.* By W. H. Spilsbury. (London: William Pickering, 1850.)

<sup>2</sup> The Cofferer of the Royal Household was the officer who kept the palace accounts, paid the servants and current charges. He was under the Comptroller and his books, etc., were audited by the Exchequer.

which became involved in the Babington-Ballard Plot for the deliverance of the imprisoned Queen of Scots, and with the rest, he perished on the scaffold, 20th September, 1586. It may be added that the assassination part of the conspiracy had no approval or support whatever from young Habington and his immediate set. The liberation of the Scottish Andromeda was alone the object of this Persian band. Hindlip Hall or Castle seems to have been built about 1572, and at the time when Fr. Oldcorne arrived there, or a little later, the mansion had become a perfect rabbit-warren of secret hiding-places and modes of escape. Trap-doors, sliding panels, secret staircases and curiously constructed retreats and egresses existed everywhere, while the house itself, standing as it did upon an eminence, enabled the inmates to observe the approach of suspicious or unwelcome strangers. Most of these ingenious, but necessary, contrivances of the penal days, were the work of Brother Nicholas Owen, S.J., a famous joiner, and they, like others of the kind up and down the country, are a lasting memorial of the straits our Catholic forefathers were so long put to, to safeguard the Mass and the other rites and beliefs of the ancient Faith.<sup>1</sup> Fr. Oldcorne remained at Hindlip sixteen years, and during that time is said to have reconciled many persons to the Church, including the Squire's sister, Dorothy Habington. That lady, from her long residence at the Court of Queen Elizabeth, had imbibed the fanatical Calvinism which characterized the established religion towards the end of the Queen's reign, and she was, needless to add, a bitter enemy of everything that savoured of the old Church. By much prayer and fasting, Fr. Oldcorne won over this unlikely convert, who is reported to have deeply bewailed her long obduracy and the blindness which had robbed her of the many consolations of the true Faith.<sup>2</sup>

Fr. Oldcorne's missionary journeys took him to the extremes of Worcestershire, and far beyond it. To these incessant labours is attributed a severe ulceration which caused the zealous priest much distress. Devotion to the ancient British Saint led him to go on a pilgrimage to St Winifred's Well, which pious journey the relaxation of the penal laws after the accession of James I made possible. When on the way to the Well, he is said to have stayed at the house of a great Catholic family, presumably the Mostyns of Talacre, where the Chaplain showed him a stone which had been taken from the miraculous fountain. The afflicted priest forthwith applied this stone to his wound, at the same time commending himself to the suffrages of the Saint, and after bathing in the Well, he was found

<sup>1</sup> Brother N. Owen, S.J., known as "Little John," is also supposed to have designed the secret hiding-places at Sutton Place, near Guildford. He died in the Tower from the effects of torture either in May or November 1606.

<sup>2</sup> Challoner, *Missionary Priests*, vol. ii., Appendix. (Art and Book Co., London.)

to be perfectly cured of his dangerous and troublesome malady. It is from the particulars later given by him to Fr. John Gerard, that we learn the history of this edifying and consoling incident, which made a great sensation in the district, and is, indeed, one of the many undoubted cure's wrought through the intercession of the martyred Virgin and Princess.

Though the Squire of Hindlip was brother-in-law of Lord Montague, who informed by the mysterious letter from Tresham, became instrumental in revealing to the Government of James I the existence of the Gunpowder Plot,<sup>1</sup> it is improbable that either he or any other of the members of his family had any previous knowledge of that frightful conspiracy. The English Catholics, generally, as the King himself subsequently admitted, were not in the awful secret, and the overwhelming majority of them vehemently denounced the crime. The shadow of the dark event, however, fell upon Hindlip in this way. When "the Gunpowder Treason and Plot" was discovered in November, 1605, Fr. Garnet, the Provincial of the English Jesuits, was at Coughton Court, Warwickshire, one of the seats of the ancient family of Throckmorton. A letter had been found on Guy Fawkes addressed to the famous priest—then residing at White Webbs, Hertfordshire—and the Privy Council, of course, was soon most anxious to lay hands not only on Garnet, but also on Fathers Greenway and Gerard—the three confessors of the Conspirators. Early in December, Garnet, for greater security, went to Hindlip at the express invitation of Fr. Oldcorne, though the letter requesting the Provincial's presence at Hindlip had actually been sent several weeks before. This point is material, for if the invitation were sent before the warrant of the Privy Council for the arrest of Garnet appeared, Oldcorne, on the face of it, could not be guilty of "harbouring a traitor." When all was over, Fathers Gerard and Greenway escaped to the Continent, and it is likely enough that Garnet would have eluded pursuit, too, had not Humphrey Littleton, then in prison for concealing at Hagley his cousin and another of the plotters, informed the Government—probably under threat of torture—that Garnet was at Hindlip. In January, 1606, Sir Henry Bromley, a local Justice, and a body of soldiers, a hundred in number, armed with guns and all sorts of weapons, forced their way into the house, and a regular search began. Doors were forced, wainscots ripped open, floors forced up, yet nothing found but "some popish trash" under the boards. For days the search went on relentlessly, but hot as it was, it seems very probable that the quarry even then would have escaped had more time

<sup>1</sup> The vexed question of the secret knowledge of the Plot alleged to have already been possessed by the ministers of James I need not be discussed here. In almost every conspiracy, the ruling powers have been accused of being privy to the same, and in using the odium caused by the "discovery" for the purpose of discrediting their enemies!

been given them to select a hiding-place that had an egress into the grounds. At length after nearly a week, two spectre-like figures came out of a recess. They were the "wanted" priests driven forth by lack of air and not dearth of provisions, for "marmalade and other sweetmeats" were found in the hold lately occupied by them. The place was blocked by books and furniture, and, no doubt, suffocation under such conditions would not have been a long or difficult matter.

Sir Henry Bromley, though reckoned "the greatest Puritan" in Worcestershire, was soon won by the charm of his chief captive Fr. Garnet. That famous priest, together with Fr. Oldcorne and the Squire of Hindlip, was brought up to London under a strong escort, and by the time the Capital was reached, Bromley had conceived a sort of enthusiasm for Garnet, who was a man of deep piety, genial disposition and wonderful powers of mind. The good offices of Sir Henry caused the prisoners to receive practically good treatment for some time, but why later, Fr. Oldcorne was fearfully racked in the Tower is not clear. He had been far from the scene of the conspiracy, and personally knew little of the chief actors in it. On the other hand, Garnet, who as the Provincial of the Jesuits in England, and one well acquainted with Catesby and several of his abettors, was, no doubt, regarded as very deep in the affair. Yet he was exempted from torture by the express order of the King. In spite of his awful sufferings Oldcorne persistently denied any guilty knowledge of the plot. But the famous "arranged" conversation between him and Garnet in the Tower, when the questions and answers were taken down by the two concealed listeners, Lockerson and Forsett, enabled the authorities to collect evidence warranting—according to the standards of the day—the trial of both prisoners for high treason. On 21st March, 1606, Fr. Oldcorne was sent back to Worcester, and at the Lent Assizes—quite a number of the Catholic sufferers in this period of the penal days seem to have been indicted at the Lent Assizes—he was arraigned for (a) inviting Garnet, an accused traitor, to hide at Hindlip; (b) for requesting in writing Fr. Robert Jones of Herefordshire to shelter two of the conspirators. The sentence of death which, of course, followed the formal trial was carried out, 7th April, 1606, at Redhill, near Worcester. It is related by Bishop Challoner that after the sufferer's heart and entrails were cast into the fire, the flames continued burning for sixteen days, despite heavy rain, "which was looked upon as a prodigy and testimony of his innocence." Humphrey Littleton, who was executed at the same time, asked pardon of God before the people for having wrongfully accused Fr. Oldcorne of a share in the conspiracy. At his trial, the priest reminded the Court that he had invited Fr. Garnet to visit Hindlip some six weeks before the proclamation came out against him, and that he, the accused,

had no knowledge whatever of the Plot until it was made "public to all the world." As hatred of the Catholic religion alone was obviously the reason of his death, the cause of Fr. Oldcorne has been included in the list of the other martyrs whose names are being considered in Rome with a view to canonization, and the result may be awaited with confidence. In conclusion it may be said that the Venerable Edward Oldcorne was regarded as the establisher and director of "nearly all the domestic churches in his locality" (Foley: *Records*, xii. p. 843). These "domestic churches," of course, are the private oratories of such old Catholic families as the Winters of Huddington, Lyttletons of Hagley, Berkeleys of Spetchley, Hornyholds of Blackmore Park, Baynhams of Pursell, and Williams of Malvern, who so long kept the Mass and the Faith, generally, from becoming extinct in Worcestershire and the adjacent counties.

[Challoner: *Memoirs of Missionary Priests*, vol. ii. Foley: *Records of the Eng. Province, S. J.*, vols. ix. and xii. David Jardine: *A Narrative of the Gunpowder Plot*. (London, 1857.) Lingard: *History of England*, vol. vii. *Cath. Record Society, Miscellanea*, vol. vii. Gillow: *Bibliographical Dictionary of the English Catholics*.]

APRIL 8

## BILLIART, THE BLESSED JULIE, FOUNDRESS OF THE CONGREGATION OF SISTERS OF NOTRE DAME

(1751-1816)

It was a common remark among well-informed, sympathetic publicists at the beginning of the nineteenth century, that after the overthrow of religion and settled government, the greatest disaster brought upon France by the Revolution was the almost entire destruction of the system of education that existed in 1789. Old France had more universities, colleges and schools than any other country in the world. The vast majority of these time-honoured, and generally very efficient, institutions were swept away by the Jacobins, and their material resources seized and squandered by the promoters of the new "enlightenment." But if the losses were enormous, the recuperative genius of the French character was never more conspicuously seen than in the restoration of the homes of learning that so speedily followed after the establishment of the Concordat (1802). Among the many and deservedly illustrious names associated with this noble work, that of Julie Billiart will ever stand forth conspicuous. Nor are the circumstances of her career less noteworthy than her achievements. The sixth child of a poor shopkeeper of Cavilly in Picardy, named Jean

Francis Billiard, and his wife, Marie Louise Antoinette Debraine, she was born 12th July, 1751. She only received a common education at the village school kept by her uncle, Thelbault Guilbert, but her youthful piety was such, that she was allowed to make her first Communion at the age of nine. The usual age for this ceremony at that time in France—no doubt owing to the influence of Jansenism—was about the age of twelve, but apart from her solid piety, Julie was no ordinary child. She aided her parents strenuously and cheerfully in their combined shopkeeping and agricultural work, and in her spare time gathered the children of the village about her and explained the Catechism to them. Then a seeming great misfortune occurred. One night in the winter of 1774, a robber discharged a pistol into the house of the Billiards, and the report so frightened the sensitive girl, that Julie henceforth for many years suffered from severe paralysis. Instead of repining, the now, apparently, hopeless cripple redoubled her prayers and spiritual exercises, received Holy Communion daily, and soon became known far and wide for the depth and wisdom of her conversation and the penetration of her perception. She supported herself as well as she could by making altar linen, and very soon her humble abode became the object of a sort of pilgrimage, many persons in spiritual and temporal trouble coming to seek the prayers and wise advice of “the Saint of Cavilly,” as these zealous folk would persist in terming the poor invalid, to her great grief and manifest embarrassment. Among those who conversed with her at this time were Monseigneur François Joseph de la Rochefoucauld, and his brother, the Bishop of Saintes, both of whom subsequently perished in the massacre at the Carmes, in September 1792. After the interview, which took place at the episcopal palace, his Lordship said to the assembled ecclesiastical dignitaries: “This young girl seems to be inspired by God Himself. I shall be much surprised if we do not hear her spoken about later on!” During the Revolution, Julie had much to suffer from the “Constitutional” Curé—whom the revolutionary authorities had thrust upon the parish—and his republican abettors. She sojourned for a while at the Château of Gournay-sur-Arondre, and thence journeyed on to Compiègne, where she lived near the holy Carmelite nuns, who, in 1793, went from their prison to the guillotine chanting the *Te Deum*—another glorious band of martyrs of holy Church.<sup>1</sup> Julie Billiard's next place of abode was Amiens, where she arrived in October, 1794, at the request of the Vicomtesse Françoise Blin de Bourdon, who was desirous of instituting some kind of good work that might help to restore religion and social sanity after the blood and nightmare of the recent “Terror” (1793-94). The Viscountess herself had been in the hands of the Jacobins, and had only escaped the common fate of thousands

<sup>1</sup> See the account of the Carmelite Nuns of Compiègne, martyrs, under July 16th.



of so-called "aristocrats," by the death of the Arch-fiend, Robespierre himself. Not only was Julie installed in the house of her benefactress, but her room became a chapel where Holy Mass was said daily by a more or less disguised priest, the Abbé Thomas. In spite of fiery harangues from imported demagogues, the planting of trees of liberty, and even an ominous parade of the awful "Red Widow"—the guillotine!—Amiens, thanks largely to its sturdy Norman common sense, had been less affected by the revolutionary madness than most towns of France. Still, the actual situation there was bad enough. From the official report of Jacques Silher, member of the Municipal Council of Amiens, we learn that most of the children of the city, owing to the absence of good schools or teachers were growing up in vice and insubordination. The writer bitterly deplored the loss of the excellent primary and secondary schools, which existed before the Revolution under religious teachers, where, for the most part, the instruction was free and open to all! The teachers, who have taken the place of the brothers and nuns, continues our informant, were indifferent to their work, often without moral character, and seemingly desirous only of making money.<sup>1</sup> "The pious ladies who gradually formed a circle" around the Viscountess, gradually came to learn the principles of the interior life from the saintly invalid, Julie Belliart, and to love through her "the cause of God and His poor." These devout souls were powerfully aided by the wise counsels of Père Joseph Desiré Varin (1769-1850), of the famous "Pères de la Foi," one of the many new religious foundations that arose during the Revolution itself. By the advice of Fr. Varin, and with the approval of the Bishop of Amiens, Mgr Demandolx, formerly Bishop of La Rochelle, a society was formed to promote the welfare of poor children, chiefly as to their religious and moral education. A school was opened in the Rue Neuve which soon became too small, and another and larger house was taken in 1806, in the Faubourg Noyon. The new foundation was much assisted by a certain Madame de Franssu—widow of the Messire Adrien Jacques de Franssu—who later established the "Congregation of the Sisters of the Nativity" for the education of girls.<sup>2</sup> It was about this time, too, that Julie Billiart at the conclusion of a Novena, was completely cured of her long paralytic malady and on 15th October, 1804, she, together with Françoise Blin de Bourdon, Victoria Lebeu and Justine Garson, took the first vows in the Congregation of Sisters of Notre Dame.<sup>3</sup> The foundation had not been made without a severe trial. As in

<sup>1</sup> Darsay, *Amiens et le département de la Somme pendant la Revolution*, ii. 144, etc.

<sup>2</sup> Jeanne de Croquoison, Mme de Franssu (1751-1824), Foundress of the Congregation of the Nativity, is regarded as one of the restorers of Christian education in France. There are two convents of the foundation in England, one at Eastbourne and the other at Sittingbourne.

<sup>3</sup> The Rule of the Congregation de Notre Dame was approved by Gregory XVI in 1844

the case of St Alphonsus, who was abandoned by nearly all the early Redemptorists, so all the "circle" of devout ladies already referred to had fallen off one by one from Mère Julie and Mère St Joseph (Mme Blin), thus proving yet again that religious vocation is not given to every one, however spiritually minded. The Congregation not only vowed itself to the Christian education of girls, and the training of teachers, but further, held itself ready to go wherever its services might be required. No distinction was made between Choir-Sisters and Lay-Sisters, but in view of the increasing educational requirements of the age, and their very probable great extension in the future, much stress was laid, from the first, on the importance of turning out always a body of really well-equipped teachers—an ideal that has ever since been carefully maintained. Within ten years of its commencement, the foundation had already more than justified itself even from the point of view of those practical "results" which have such a fascination for the publicist and even the "man in the street." Houses existed in various parts of France and Belgium, notwithstanding the world-war which raged around the tottering throne of the imperial Colossus. On the 15th of January, 1809, the Mother-House was transferred to Namur, owing to an unfortunate episode that occurred at Amiens. During the absence of Fr. Varin, the confessor of the nuns, the Abbé de Sambucey de St Esleve, with more zeal than discretion, endeavoured to assimilate the Congregation to the ideals animating the ancient orders of women, regardless of the fact that times and requirements were utterly changed! Rather than see nearly the whole object of the Congregation destroyed, Mother Julie resolved to leave Amiens and go to Ghent, where the Bishop, Mgr Jean Maurice de Broglie, greatly wished to have a branch of the, by now, well-known teaching order.<sup>1</sup> The new Mother-House, as the "branch" at Namur soon became, was quickly regarded as something more than a centre of excellent collegiate education. The saintly character of Mother Julie and her magnetic influence, exercised by voice and pen, soon had their effect over countless souls, and became, in fact, a real "apostolate." The departure of the nuns from Amiens was regarded as something of a calamity by the Bishop of that city, Mgr. Demandolx, and his advisers, who did all they could to retain Madame Julie in their midst, but as she said in a letter to M. de Sambucey, the cause of all the trouble: "My Bishop is at Namur, and my choice is made! I hope God will bless it, for my intention is upright." The last years of the Foundress

<sup>1</sup> The Bishop (1766-1821) was the son of the famous Marshal Duc de Broglie who advised a "whiff of grape-shot"—"pour la canaille il faut la mitraille!"—as a short and sharp cure for the rising Revolution, or rather the anarchic part of it. The remedy unfortunately was not applied till 1799, when Bonaparte used it with complete success on the mobs that sought to revive the disorders of 1791-1792 and the carnage of 1793-1794.

were clouded by two anxieties, war and severe illness, Belgium, which in 1814-15, became once more the "cockpit of Europe," saw its territory overrun by the French and allied armies, but happily no harm came to the convents of the religious, and the result of the ever-memorable campaign was the establishment of a peace for the country that was not to be seriously disturbed for a hundred years. In January, 1816, seven years after her quitting Amiens, Mother Julie was taken ill, and after three months of suffering borne with the patience and resignation begotten of years of real devotion and submission to God's will, she died sweetly in the Lord, just after repeating the sublime heart-pourings of the *Magnificat*, on 8th April, 1816. The fame of her holiness which had commenced even with her early childhood, increased all during the nineteenth century, and finally in 1881, the long-delayed cause of her beatification was introduced at Rome. It was completed in 1906, when Pius X enrolled her venerable name among the Blessed. Of the numerous houses of the Congregation de Notre Dame in England, the most famous is that for the training of school-mistresses at Mt. Pleasant, Liverpool, the management of which was entrusted to the Sisters by the Government in 1856. The "Centre-System," or concentrated instruction of pupil-teachers, which the Sisters introduced, is now adopted by all the more important education committees in this country.

[*Life of Blessed Julie Billiart*, by a Sister of Notre Dame. (London 1909.) Much information also in *Madame de Franssu Fondatrice de la Congregation de la Nativité de N.S.*, by the Abbé L. Cristiani. (Avignon Aubanel Frères, 1926).]

APRIL 11

# GERVAISE, O.S.B., THE BLESSED GEORGE, PRIEST, MARTYR

(1571-1608). Beatified Dec. 15, 1929.

MAYBE, from the fact that his father, John Gervaise, Esq., of Bosham, Sussex, had married a lady of the knightly family of the Shelleys of Michel Grove, the Rev. G. Gervaise is sometimes, but erroneously, styled Sir George.<sup>1</sup> This surname is also occasionally spelt "Jervis." Having been left an orphan at the age of twelve, he was, when nearly fourteen years of age, seized by a pirate—said to have been an ex-officer of one of

<sup>1</sup> The Shelleys of Michel Grove were Catholics down to 1715, when Sir John Shelley, fourth Baronet, conformed to the Established Church. He died 1771. Percy Bysshe Shelley the poet belonged to the younger branch, the Shelleys of Castle-Goring.

Sir Francis Drake's ships—and taken to the West Indies. The Channel at that time, and indeed for many years afterwards, swarmed with Corsairs, and the craft which missed the English or French filibusters, was almost certain of "falling in with a Salee Rover." It is not surprising that young Gervaise soon lost every bit of religion he had among the lawless characters then afloat. After about twelve years spent in raids on Spanish ports and other sharp encounters with the "Dons," he returned to Europe. His elder brother, Henry, a devout Catholic, having found the burdens of the penal laws intolerable, had retired to Flanders, and George, who, now after his long absence, paid him a visit, was led through his conversation and example, and the instructions of a good priest, to return to the practice of his religion. A "vocation" about this time manifested itself, and he was admitted to the English College, Douay, 1595. There the young ex-seaman spent eight years in the study of classics, philosophy and divinity. He was confirmed and given the tonsure by the Lord Bishop of Namur, 4th August, 1600 (*Third Douay Diary*), and in May, 1603, the four Minor and two Major Orders (*ibid.*)<sup>1</sup> The priesthood followed in 1st June of the same year. On 26th August, 1604, he set out for England. The recent accession of James I had led to a relaxation of the penal statutes, and there was a distinct revival of Catholicism. The fury aroused by the discovery of the Gunpowder Plot, however, caused a fearful increase of persecution, and the Rev. George Gervaise, who is described as having been unwearied in his efforts to promulgate the Faith, was among the first to be arrested. The disposition of the Court had, happily, undergone a great change for the better. James, despite his own peculiar hierarchical pretensions, could never forget that his mother had been almost a martyr for the Catholic religion, while the Queen-Consort, Anne of Denmark, was secretly known to have a profound attachment to the old Faith. There was, therefore, "a stay of execution," as far as priests were concerned, and in June, 1606, George Gervaise and a number of others were banished. After a short visit to Douay, he set off on a devotional pilgrimage to Rome, where he sought to enter the Society of Jesus, but was not accepted. On returning to Douay, he is stated to have received the habit of St Benedict at St Gregory's Monastery. He stayed at Douay some months, and then on 21st September again left to return to England.

Ever since the accession of James I there had been among Catholics a strong feeling that better times were at hand, and even the catastrophe

<sup>1</sup> Under date, 1st February, 1599 in the Summary of the *Third Douay Diary* there is a curious entry relating to the "baptismal rites" performed over sixteen students, including the Ven. George Gervaise. It is surmised that this entry relates to conditional baptism, some doubt of the actual reception of the sacrament having arisen, a serious matter in all cases, but especially so, where Church-students are concerned!

of the Gunpowder Plot did not entirely destroy that belief. The King, despite Sully's well-known jibe, appears to have been generally humane and inclined to toleration, and when every one was crying out for a holocaust of papists after the awful November of 1605, the Scottish Solomon still kept his head, and differentiated between the guilty and the innocent. There had also long been talk of an "Oath of Allegiance," which Catholics could conscientiously take, and one actually appeared in 1606. In it, unfortunately, was a clause drawn up by Archbishop Bancroft of Canterbury, at the suggestion of Sir Christopher Perkins, a former member of the Society of Jesus, in which the tenet relating to the excommunication and deposition of princes by the Pope was to be regarded as "impious and heretical"—"a damnable doctrine and position." No one nowadays, as the Rev. Ethelred Taunton, the great literary foe of the "Society," points out, "holds in practice the doctrine of the deposing power, direct or indirect, of the Pope."<sup>1</sup> The reigning pontiff, Paul V, condemned the new oath, though in very general terms, as containing "many things clearly opposed to faith and salvation." Belief in the deposing power, as a fact, was almost dead, but to describe the principle as "heretical and damnable" was going altogether beyond the point. A controversy, of course, arose among the Catholic clergy on the lawfulness of subscribing the oath, and if the measure, as many assert, had been cunningly devised to divide the Catholic body in this country, it certainly effected its purpose. The King is said to have grown very hostile towards his Catholic subjects about this time, and three years later is described as meditating their "extermination!"<sup>2</sup> At any rate, the obnoxious oath was tendered to many persons in England, often, it seems, by itinerant pursuivants of very violent character, and among those called upon to swear, was the Rev. George Gervaise. He refused for the reasons given above, and after the usual trial and sentence at The Old Bailey, was executed at Tyburn, 11th April, 1608. His whole history presents a uniform picture of fidelity to conscience, and a generous disposition to pursue duty, however difficult. This last trait was strikingly shown when leaving for this country for the last time. His brother in Flanders, knowing the dangers of missionary life in England, sought to keep his near and dear relative at home by procuring for him a benefice in Lille, a favour which, however, was affectionately declined, with the result as recorded.

<sup>1</sup> *History of the Jesuits in England*. In a sermon preached by Pius IX, that genial pontiff is reported to have said: "No one now thinks any more of the right of deposing princes which the Holy See formerly exercised, and the Supreme Pontiff even less than any one." From a Sermon of Pius IX quoted by Cardinal Soglia. (Addis & Arnold, *A Catholic Dictionary*, 7th ed., p. 281.)

<sup>2</sup> This was reported by Father Edward Coffin. Father E. Taunton describes this as "hear say" (*History of the Jesuits in England*, pp. 360-61).

[Challoner: *Memoirs*, ii. p. 36. *Douay Diaries*, i. and ii. *History of the Jesuits in England*, by Ethelred Taunton. (London: Methuen & Co., 1901.) Gillow: *Bibliographical Dictionary*, vol. ii.]

APRIL 13

## LOCKWOOD, THE BLESSED JOHN, PRIEST, MARTYR

(1555-1642). Beatified Dec. 15, 1929.

MUCH doubt covers the exact date of the birth of this staunch Yorkshire priest, but if the *Douay Diary* be correct, and the year of the Martyr's birth was 1555, then the Rev. John Lockwood must have been the oldest of that goodly band, which between 1577 and 1681 died in witness of the Catholic Faith. He was the eldest son of Christopher Lockwood, Esquire, of Sowerby, Yorkshire, his mother, Clare, being the daughter of Christopher Lascelles, Esquire, of Sowerby and Brackenbury, in the same county. As eldest son and heir, John Lockwood could look forward to a considerable landed estate, and an income of four hundred a year, a sum fully equal to five thousand pounds at present. But resigning these prospects to a younger brother, he, with another brother, Francis, crossed the sea where both were admitted as church-students at Douay, and later migrated with the rest of the staff and scholars to Rheims. In October, 1595, John went to the English College, Rome, where, under the maternal name of Lascelles, he was ordained priest on 19th January, 1597. He came to England in 1598, and for forty-four years laboured chiefly in the north, doing much good, fortifying the resolution of Catholics wavering under the trials and sufferings of the penal laws, and reconciling many persons to the ancient Faith. He was imprisoned and banished in 1610. Bravely continuing his apostolic labours, he was again seized and sentenced to death, but obtained a reprieve, and after lying for some time in prison, was discharged at the request, it is said, of the Queen, Henrietta Maria. After this second escape, he lived in retirement as Chaplain to an old lady, named Mrs Bridget Gatenby of Wood End, Gatenbury, Yorkshire. Here he might have remained in peace, but the times were evil, and the Civil War was at hand. It was no small part of the political tactics of the powerful Puritan opposition to hold up the King as a secret abetter of "popery," and every reprieve that Charles I ventured to grant in the case of priests, was met with fierce denunciations, both of the Court, and, of course, everything Catholic. The tracking down of priests, which had been more or less in abeyance, 1625-40, now became fearfully prevalent. There was at that time in the North Riding of Yorkshire, a renegade Catholic, Cuthbert Langdale, no doubt an unworthy scion of the baronial family,

the Langdales of Holme Hall, famous alike for their fidelity to Catholicism and the Royalist Cause.<sup>1</sup> The Rev. John Lockwood was cultivating his garden at Gatenby, when Langdale and his myrmidons rushed in and made the old priest a prisoner. The age and inoffensiveness of the accused, and the circumstances of the arrest, caused much indignation in the district among both Catholics and the more kindly-disposed Protestants. The same resentment was felt at York when Langdale arrived at the Castle there with his aged captive on horseback. So far from feeling any animosity, however, against his wretched betrayer for his infamous conduct, the old priest on taking his leave of the renegade gave him an "angel" for his trouble, and also a further sum of five shillings for his assistant. The days may have been evil, but they produced great sportsmen! In York Castle, the Rev. John Lockwood had the company of another priest, the Rev. Edmund Catterick, *alias* Huddleston, who had been then some seven years on the Mission after leaving Douay (1635). He had been arrested at the instance of his own uncle—it is said—a Justice of the Peace, who caused him to be seized in his own house, while there under the pretext of a visit of friendship! At the ensuing York Assizes, both priests were sentenced to death, but they certainly would have been reprieved had it not been for the clamour of the Parliament. Charles felt the utmost reluctance to proceed to extremity, but the threats and expostulations increasing in violence, the condemned were sacrificed, as Strafford had been the year before. The King and his Court, including the little Prince of Wales, were actually staying at York, when the two priests on their hurdles passed through the streets on their way to death. At the gallows, Fr. Lockwood, seeing his younger companion somewhat perturbed by the terrible apparatus of death, turned to the Sheriff and said: "Mr Sheriff, under favour the place is mine. I am his senior by many years, with leave, I challenge it as my right to mount the ladder first." Then with the aid of two of the executioners, he mounted the cart, pausing to ask Fr. Catterick how he did? "In good heart," came the answer, "blessed be God, and ready to suffer with constancy the death Providence has allotted me." After addressing various edifying words to the crowds, Fr. Lockwood exclaimed: "Jesus, my Saviour, Jesus, my Redeemer, receive my Soul, Jesus be to me a Jesus." Fr. Catterick, having reminded the people that both he and his colleague were condemned solely on account of their priesthood, and after adding earnest prayers for the King and

<sup>1</sup> Sir Marmaduke Langdale, first Baron Langdale of Holme (1598-1661), commanded the left wing of the Royal Army at Marston Moor, 1644. He was a most gallant, yet wary cavalry leader, and had Prince Rupert only followed his prudent advice, the issue of the war would, no doubt, have been far different. He is said to have lost £160,000, about one million pounds sterling present currency, in the cause of Charles I.

Royal Family, especially that the dissensions between the Court and Parliament might end, both good Fathers were flung off the ladder. For some time the hangman refused to proceed with the quartering, being quite against the horrid butchery, until seized by the Sheriff's officers and compelled to do his hateful business. He then fell to like a madman, cutting and slashing the bodies, and flinging the blood about over the crowd! Fr. Lockwood's head was placed on a spike over Bootham Bar, York, and the sight of it, as he rode through the gateway, must have caused the King feelings better imagined than described!

[Gillow: *Bibliographical Dictionary of the English Catholics*, iv.  
Challoner: *Memoirs*, ii. *Catholic Record Society*, vol. x.]

APRIL 16

## ST BENEDICT JOSEPH LABRE, CONFESSOR (1748-1783)

OUR Saviour's prophetic words, "For the poor you have always with you" (*St Mark* xiv. 7), have often been forcibly brought home to each succeeding generation by scenes and incidents, many of them not wanting the element of the dramatic. The poor, as the chief of the material treasures of the Church—a similitude which so enraged the Prefect of pagan Rome under Valerian against St Lawrence—is one of these, and all through the ages the work of aiding and consoling the needy, has been regarded as one of the noblest of the deeds of mercy, as it is, doubtless, one of the most picturesque. The presence of poor people in such numbers in Catholic Churches has long been remarked, and, indeed, their permanent absence would make many of the better-off section of the congregation think that there was something wrong. Their presence is a constant reminder of the divine prophecy referred to, and also of that second statement from the same holy source: "The poor have the Gospel preached unto them" (*St Matt.* xi. 5). It is most fitting, therefore, that this never-ending evidence of our poor mendicant brethren, as such, should be represented among the canonized Saints of the Church. Of course, all the Saints practised poverty in spirit, but in St Benedict Joseph Labre, whom we are now about to consider, we have a concrete representative of the poor who traditionally crowd the entrances of the churches, and upon whom the alms of the charitable are bestowed.

Like so many of those who have been raised to the altar in the last two centuries, St Benedict Joseph was French. He was born at Amettes near Boulogne, 26th March, 1748, being the eldest of fifteen children of Jean Baptist Labre, a small shopkeeper, and his wife, Anne Grandsire.



Young Benedict Joseph, like the rest of his brothers and sisters, probably received the rudiments of his education partly at home and partly at the parish school, one of the thousands of excellent parochial schools which made the France of Pre-Revolution days perhaps the best instructed country in the world. As a boy, Benedict Joseph, though very amiable, was already remarkable for seriousness of character. He practised to an eminent degree those habits of self-restraint, which ascetical writers term "mortification"—that constant repression of the lower man which is the almost certain presage of a life of distinguished sanctity. Joined to this was a great horror of all that was positively wrong or whatever led up to it. As all this pointed to a probable religious vocation, young Labre was sent at the age of twelve to commence classical study under his paternal uncle, the Abbé Francis Joseph Labre, who was Curé, or parish priest of Erin. It has been represented in some quarters that Benedict Joseph was little better than a devout dolt, who was simply incapable of acquiring higher instruction. This is entirely incorrect. The future pilgrim-saint was both a diligent and intelligent student, and his Latin reading, after the elements of the grammar were mastered, embraced the well-known "*Historia Sacra*" and the usual "*Excerpta*" from the various classical authors read, then as now, in schools. To this was added a course of history, the ancient portion, no doubt, from Rollin's famous work which, in the original or translations, taught the annals of Greece and Rome to half the world, including Frederick the Great. But though no dunce, Benedict Joseph was no lover of mere learning as such. A close reader all his life of the *Imitation of Christ*, he had even at this early stage learned thoroughly the meaning of such passages as, "Woe to them who inquire of men after many curious things ; and are little curious of the way to serve Me!" (Bk. iii., ch. 43). His yearning for solitude, ardent love of austerity, and habitual union with God, made the hours spent in the acquisition of purely secular knowledge appear a sheer waste of both time and opportunity. Joined to this desire for austere personal holiness, was also an abounding charity for his neighbour's spiritual and temporal welfare. He assisted his uncle, as far as he was competent to do so, in the work of the parish, teaching the children their Catechism, reading to the sick and diffusing throughout the peasant families of the place that "atmosphere" of the Faith which is so powerful a preservative of religion. The people loved and venerated the holy youth, and the Princess de Croy—member of one of the most illustrious families of Pre-Revolution France—used to style him, "Mon petit Curé." Young Labre's zeal was conspicuously shown during the plague that devastated Erin and district, and when his uncle, the Abbé Labre, died, a martyr of charity during the infection, the nephew went to live with another uncle, the Abbé Vincent. This holy

priest, whose life resembled that of the St Curé d'Ars in the succeeding century, was a man after Benedict Joseph's own heart. The pair shared a miserable living-room and the roughest fare, giving all that was best in the matter of food and drink to the poor. Meanwhile, our Saint was reaching man's estate, and it was necessary for him to decide upon some vocation, either the cloister or the secular priesthood. His own predilection had been the severe Order of La Trappe, but in deference to the wishes of his parents, who feared that such a rigorous rule would prove too hard for their somewhat delicate son, he chose the Carthusians, but without success. He then applied to the Trappists at Neuville, and was told to study logic and plain chant before seeking for admission. This he did with but small progress, but in spite of this, was, after the prescribed period, accepted as a novice together with a friend. Benedict Joseph performed all the obligations of his new "life" with the greatest exactitude, but the growth of scruples and the increasing manifestation of a certain want of fitness for regular religious life, convinced his superiors that he had no vocation, and he left the monastery where he was already regarded as "a saint," though of a different type of sanctity from that laid down by the rule of La Trappe.

It is just at this period of Benedict Joseph Labre's extraordinary career, that those who aspire to write his biography, however brief and imperfect, find themselves confronted by the greatest difficulties in the matter of accounting for the almost unique phenomenon afforded by his subsequent life. Here was a young man of astonishing holiness, having no suitability for secular pursuits of any sort, yet not adapted, apparently, for either the priesthood, or any of the religious orders. "The Spirit," however, "breatheth where He will" (*St John* iii. 8), and, doubtless, even before he got his kindly demission from La Trappe, Labre's choice was irrevocably made. The race of "vagrom men" is not habitually regarded over here with general favour, though, be it remembered, it is the so-called Reformation that has chiefly impressed the traditional dark stigma on the wandering class. The poor and unfortunate, so ruthlessly cast into abject wretchedness by the loss of the ever-friendly Abbeys and Priories, were naturally viewed by the greedy, upstart robbers of the monastic lands as a constant reminder of their own villainy, and of the awful social misery it had entailed. Hence, the genial laws of the whipping-post, fetters and branding irons of Edward VI's time, and the only few degrees milder enactments of later reigns. But over a large part of the Continent, at least, until the time of the Revolution, the needy wayfarer was generally considered as a representative of "God's poor," to be helped and comforted as dear Oliver Goldsmith found in his romantic, penniless journeyings through France and Italy, 1754-56. So Benedict Joseph's resolution was to become a "tramp," not as a means of lazy, aimless wandering and

low self-indulgence, but to travel on foot from shrine to shrine as a pilgrim of eternity, edifying the devout by his piety, and shaming the selfish and luxurious by his constant and wonderful humility and mortifications. For some eight years (1770-1778?) this extraordinary rover in the cause of religion, traversed most of South-west Europe. His first visits were to Loretto and Rome, and he made it his custom to visit "beautiful Rome," as he called the Eternal City, every year. It was at the Church of St Romuald at Fabriano that Benedict Joseph returned to the doubtless, astonished Sacristan half the dole given him, with the words: "It is too much! Poor people ought to live by the alms they procure daily!" This was his invariable rule, and when some charitable gift exceeded, as he thought, what was necessary for his own slender wants, he always gave the greater part of it to someone whom he considered worse off than himself. In such estimation did this wholly remarkable pilgrim come to be held that the people of the various towns and localities periodically visited by him, looked for his return as a much expected annual event. At Bari, the townsfolk rose up against a graceless fellow who insulted "their pilgrim," and at Compostella, equal respect was shown to the "pelegrino santo." Labre did not fail to visit "Paray-le-Monial," already famous as the cradle of the more modern devotion to the Sacred Heart, and the Chapel where St Margaret Mary had received her consoling visions and messages, soon ranked in his regard with Loretto, Assisi, and other sacred shrines. It was probably while journeying on one occasion to Paray that St Benedict Joseph was entertained at a farmhouse near Lyons, by a certain worthy farmer, Matthieu Vianney, and Marie Baluze, his wife, and in the room of the house where the holy wanderer passed the night, the future St Curé d'Ars was born, 8th May, 1786, some three years after Benedict Joseph had passed to his reward.

But if the Saint had his earthly consolation in the shape of much kindness and respect, he had, of course, his trials. The life he had chosen with its constant exposure to the elements, its hunger and thirst and weariness, was all a form of the "cross" to be daily reckoned with, and to these were added occasionally the sufferings arising from men. At Moulins, in France, he was imprisoned for a while under suspicion of a share in a robbery that had occurred in the district, and then his half-ragged and generally odd appearance often exposed him to both ridicule and even ill-usage. He usually wore what had once been a Trappist's habit, but which, in time, became a mere "thing of shreds and patches," and to this was added an old cloak and girdle. A rosary around his neck, and a wallet containing a few necessities and some books, such as the *Breviary* and the *Imitation of Christ*, completed the bizarre outfit of this strange-looking traveller. His Chinese-like features, tall emaciated frame, and long delicate hands, were

also somewhat remarkable. But jibe and jeer, or even praise were lost on one who lived in a continual union with God, and whose haunting fear seems to have been that he might not be included among the "fewness of the elect."<sup>1</sup>

About 1778, Benedict Joseph went to live permanently in Rome, then under the beneficent rule of the large-hearted and splendid-looking Pius VI. The Romans, while praising the museums and admiring the superb collections of medals and antiquities therein—all owing to the antiquarian zeal and public spirit of the Pope—were grumbling much at the increase of taxation, owing to the cost of these and also the draining of a large part of the Pontine Marshes, then in progress. "Money, the Dead, and Cardinals" are proverbially objects of affection or admiration with the Italians. Touch any of these and a social sirocco is almost certain to arise. But Benedict Joseph took little account of the then simmering discontent in the Alma Urbs, which "every intelligent foreigner" found so full of contradictions—magnificent churches, stately palazzos, tortuous streets, gay colours, and squalid rags. Benedict Joseph, however, must have found himself quite at home among the scores of beggars, whom artists thought so "Salvator Rosa"-like, and whom economists rated as so incurably idle. Most visitors to Rome during the eighteenth century were also puzzled at the paradox presented by the great dislike of the fashionable classes for *odori*, even choice scents such as attar of roses and lavender-water, and their apparent indifference to the sickening stench from open sewers, which, not infrequently, disturbed the Rousseau-like reveries of northern sentimentalists amidst the classic and ecclesiastic grandeurs and memories of the then Garden City!<sup>2</sup> These shocks to the olfactory nerves of the Quality, however, were used by our Saint as an additional form of penance, so completely dead was he by this time to every kind of personal gratification. He was assiduous in visiting the churches, and never missed any of the great functions and feasts. During the Holy Week of 1779, he might have noticed in the Church of Sancta Maria in Trastevere, an elderly, but distinguished-looking, personage dressed in black, with the "George" and Ribbon of the Garter, deep in devotion before the Madonna de Strada. The attendant *Cavaliere*, or the whisperings of the migratory congregation, would have informed him that it was *Il Re*—none other than the titular Charles III of Great Britain and Ireland, but whom his own "subjects"

<sup>1</sup> Among the books read by the Saint as a boy, was an apparently gloomy treatise by Père Aveugle, on the difficulties of Salvation, which work, no doubt, exactly suited the spiritual pessimism of the time and the prevailing Jansenism which so largely caused it. Such books, however, while not for all, have their merits in drawing serious attention to a subject of paramount importance, and, in any case, Fr. Aveugle's dissertation helped to shape the career of our extraordinary Saint.

<sup>2</sup> *Glimpses of Italian Society in the Eighteenth Century. From the Journey of Mrs Piozzi.* (London: Seeley & Co. Ltd., 1892.)

styled *Il Prentendente*! In the course of the last years of his life in Rome, Benedict Joseph lodged in various humble abodes, now in a cellar near the Quirinal, then by the ruins of the Colosseum—where Gibbon heard the distant chanting of the Friars while musing on the glory that was Rome's—and finally and permanently, as an inmate of the Saint Martin's Night Shelter. Though "sleeping out" is a very different experience in Italy from what it is in our cold, variable climate, no doubt, even the most ascetic of us likes to think that this weary, worn sojourner among many men and cities found a more or less homelike shelter at last. It was fitting, however, that one whose whole life almost was spent in visiting shrines and churches should have been seized with his last illness in the Church of Santa Maria in Monte while hearing Mass there on the Wednesday of Holy Week, 1783. He was removed to the house of a butcher, named Francesco Zaccarelli, who had been very kind to the wonderful Frenchman, and in the abode of this obscure tradesman, in the Via dei Serpenti, the soul of Benedict Joseph Labre passed to its reward. The marvellous career of the celebrated pilgrim was already familiar to all Romans, and on Holy Thursday vast crowds attended the remains of the deceased, as arrayed in the habit of the Carmelite Confraternity of St Martino, these were conducted to the Church of the Madonna de Monte, there to lie in almost regal state. Cardinals, princes, bishops, priests, religious and lay persons of every rank thronged the Church to gaze upon "Il Santo," and implore his intercession. On the eve of Holy Saturday, the body, enclosed in two coffins, was interred beneath the high altar. At the requiem that day, Latin eulogies of the wonderful mendicant were pronounced by Fr. Mariani and a certain Doctor del Pino. The title Venerable was conferred on Benedict Joseph by Pius VI, 18th February, 1794, and probably nothing but the French invasion of Rome and the long revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars prevented his speedy beatification. That was pronounced by Pius IX, who had a great devotion to the holy wanderer, on the 20th May, 1860. It was reserved for Leo XIII, who represented so much that was great and striking in Catholic erudition and philosophy, and who ever showed himself the true champion and friend of the proletariat, to pronounce the Canonization of this humble soul, whose surprising love of God had found so unique and curious an expression. This crowning event in the history of the Saint took place, 8th December, 1881, on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception of Our Lady, whose devout client he had been during the years of prayer and pilgrimage that were only to end with entry into the true home of all the just.

[*Lives* of St Benedict Joseph Labre began to appear very shortly after his death. That by Marconi, his confessor, published

in 1785, records some 136 miracles alleged to have been wrought through the Saint's intercession. Most of these relate to bodily cures. An English edition of this biography is said to have materially helped in the conversion of the Rev. John Thayer (1755-1815), the holy, but somewhat erratic, American missionary priest. There is a good sketch of the Saint by the Rev. Arthur Little, S.J., in the *Irish Messenger Series* (Dublin, 1921). Many curious but, no doubt, authentic details are also given in a very hostile account of St Benedict Joseph, contained in the anti-clerical work, *Rome: Its Princes, Priests and People*, vol. ii., by Fanny MacLaughlin. (London: Elliot Stock, 1885.)]

## APRIL 17

HEATH, O.S.F., THE VENERABLE HENRY, MARTYR  
(1599-1643)

A WRITER in the *Tablet* for 22nd January, 1887, was instrumental in making generally known the fact that Henry Heath, one of the best loved and most venerated of the English Martyrs, was born at Peterborough, on 16th December, 1599. His father, John Heath, and also his mother, were both Protestants. The status of the family is not mentioned, but as the subject of these remarks was sent to Cambridge to complete his studies, it may be presumed that the Heaths were of the better class. Henry, in 1617, entered St Benet's College, founded in 1352, by the members of the Guilds of Corpus Christi and the Blessed Virgin Mary, but the College has long been more generally known under the title of Corpus Christi. He graduated B.A. in 1621, and M.A. a little later. His devotion to learning, especially of the classical and patristic kind, caused him to be appointed librarian of the College, a very congenial post, for the library of the place had been recently greatly enriched by the valuable collection of books and MSS. bequeathed by Archbishop Parker of Canterbury. The first primate of the Elizabethan hierarchy had been not only an indefatigable bibliophile, but had himself edited the works of Ælfric, Matthew Paris, and Giraldus Cambrensis, besides maintaining a whole array of printers, transcribers and engravers. Scholars of "all persuasions," therefore, owe a lasting debt of gratitude to the prelate who did so much to preserve the learning of past ages amidst the ravages of the Reformation. Among the later books added to the library, was Dr William Whitaker's reply to Cardinal Bellarmine—"Prælectiones in quibus tractatur controversia de ecclesia contra pontificios, imprimis Robertum

Bellarminum Jesuitam in septem quæstiones distributa." This work appeared at Cambridge, in 1599, the year of Henry Heath's birth, and it was long regarded as a trenchant reply to the famous Roman theologian, whose portly person and sweeping beard were already familiar to the masses of Europe and this country through the round, bulky stoneware "greybeard" jugs, called after his name—Bellarmines! The "Prælectiones" were carefully studied by Mr Heath, who was accustomed to rise, both summer and winter, at 2 o'clock A.M., and begin his reading for the day. He was one of the few students who take the trouble to verify statements upon which great issues hang, and in following out this laudable practice, he soon found that many of the references to, and quotations from, the Fathers given by Whitaker, were either utterly incorrect, or related to matters not in question. It may have been that Whitaker had taken these passages from the "Magdeburg Centuriators," whose deficiencies in this respect, wilful or careless, had been so completely exposed by Cardinal Baronius. However this may have been, it seems difficult to credit the story that Bellarmine had such a great respect for the "Pride and Ornament of Cambridge,"—as Churton terms the violently Calvinistic Whitaker—as to keep his portrait suspended in his study! On the other hand, it may have been so, for the Cardinal Archbishop of Capua "made war like a gentleman," and the "Prælectiones," in view of the discoveries by Heath, and no doubt, other close inquirers, must have enhanced by contrast the value of his own erudite works. The patristic inaccuracies of Whitaker, joined to the existing controversies of the day between the rival "schools" of Archbishop Abbot and his future successor, Laud, involving, as they did, sharply contradictory doctrines and theories of Church government, all went to open Mr Heath's eyes to the fundamental and everlasting principle of *Authority*. He began to question and to question openly the historical event that had cut off this country from the centre of Christendom, and left its religious establishment at the mercy of the secular power, and made it the battle-ground of mutually destructive opinions! This change of sentiment soon came to the ears of the College authorities, and, to avoid imprisonment, Mr Heath left the University, and proceeded to London. His immediate intention now was to seek reconciliation with the Catholic Church. He applied for this purpose to the Spanish Ambassador, but His Excellency, though habitually very kind to poor Catholics who sought his good offices, did not see his way to assist the utterly unknown stranger. No doubt the words "Cambridge University," and "wish to become a Catholic," put the experienced diplomat on his guard. The triple negotiations between James I, Philip III of Spain, and Pope Urban VIII, with reference to the proposed marriage of "Baby Charles," with the Infanta, were still in progress, and a strongly Puritan, and, there-

fore very hostile House of Commons, was watching the result. A conversion involving a notable member of the University, and in connection with the embassy of his "Most Catholic Majesty," would be sure to cause a violent explosion of anger in the Lower House, to be followed by a peremptory demand for the breaking off of the objectionable "Spanish Match," and an immediate and rigorous enforcement of the penal laws! There are always two sides to every question, and we must consider all these contingencies before condemning too hastily the Marquis de Gondomar for turning away even a future martyr for the Faith.<sup>1</sup> Mr Heath's next application to a native Catholic, Mr George Jerningham, of the ancient stock of Cossey, Norfolk, was even more unpropitious, for he was roundly called a spy, and repulsed with angry words. Here, again, the case calls for lenient judgment. The penal code was a fearful and ever-present thing, and false brethren were as rife under the first Stuart King as they were in the days of St Paul. In his perplexity, Mr Heath betook himself to prayer, especially to Our Lady, *Auxilium Christianorum*. Shortly afterwards the very Mr Jerningham, who had behaved so roughly towards him, made amends by coming to his assistance, and putting him into communication with the Rev. George Fisher, generally known on the Mission as Gregory Musket or Muscott.<sup>2</sup> Mr Fisher, in due course, received his Cambridge catechumen into the Church, and the Spanish Ambassador, being now assured of the genuineness of the new adherent to the troubled Church in England, stood good friend to the convert, giving him, among other things, a letter of recommendation to the Rev. Matthew Kellison, D.D., Rector of Douay. He was received very kindly at the English College, and settled down to study for the priesthood, but two of the Fathers of the Franciscan College of St Bonaventure in the same town, happening to come to the English College one day, Mr Heath felt such an attraction for the life of the Seraphic Order, that he got leave to apply for admission into it. He was received, and at the end of the usual year's novitiate, duly professed.

Both as student and graduate at Cambridge, Henry Heath had led a

<sup>1</sup> Gondomar is the Ambassador usually named in connection with this affair, though his tenure of office ended, 1621—apparently just before the Ven. Henry Heath's conversion.

<sup>2</sup> The Rev. George Fisher, *alias* Musket, styled the *Flos Cleri Anglicani* (1580?–1645), was originally a servant to the priests imprisoned at Wisbech Castle, where he and his brother were converted as boys. For this they were flogged publicly and put in irons. George studied for a time at Douay, but was ordained at the English College, Rome, 1606. The Bishop of *Chalcedon* made him one of his Canons, 1624, and after many years of missionary labour in England, including imprisonments and a sentence of death, he was banished. He succeeded Dr Kellison as Rector of Douay, 1641, and during his short rule of four years did much to free the place from debt, and to infuse a new and more enthusiastic spirit into both professors and students. He was buried in the Lady Chapel of St James's Church, Douay.



life of great austerity, rising, as we have seen, very early and spending much time in prayer. His holy example had impressed itself on many of his contemporaries, and even before he quitted the University, several members of the College had preceded him in submitting to the Church, and of these one had joined the Society of Jesus, and three others the Franciscans.

As a Franciscan, Henry Heath took the name of Brother Paul of St Magdalen, and if his life before had been one of remarkable holiness, its sanctity now became extraordinary. He fasted rigorously four or even five days a week, wore a hair shirt and iron girdle, took the discipline, and usually passed his few hours of nightly rest on the bare floor. Not content with the midnight Matins with the rest of the community, he often spent the rest of the early hours in private devotion till the time of prime. Part of this consisted in a long meditation and pious aspirations. He bound himself not only to renounce every unnecessary gratification, however harmless, but to serve others in their wants, and to be dead to their defects.

While thus advancing far on the path of personal perfection, Fr. Henry Heath—to use the name by which he is generally known—was widely regarded both as a scholar of great learning and an able administrator. For several years he filled the Chair of Dogmatic Theology in his Monastery, and was, moreover, Commissary of the English houses of the Order in Belgium. At the Fourth Provincial Chapter, held in April, 1640, he was named Guardian of St Bonaventure's, Douay, and Lecturer-Professor of the theological writings of that great Doctor of the Church.

Fr. Heath did more than lecture and expound. He brought out in 1634, his long well-known *Soliloquia seu Documenta Christianae Perfectionis* — Soliloquies or Documents of Christian Perfection, which reached a sixth edition at Douay in 1674, and was reprinted by Dolman of London in 1844. It reveals the sanctity of the future Martyr in a very strong light. He is also the author of about thirty other treatises on theological subjects. These do not appear to have been printed, but they were at St Bonaventure's, Douay, as late as 1743, and may still be in existence.

It was generally remarked during the days of persecution in this country, that whenever instances occurred of sentences of death for the Faith, great enthusiasm appeared to be manifested among the English students and priests abroad, who, so far from being deterred by the tragedy, seemed eager to emulate these glorious examples of zeal and constancy. In 1641, several priests, including the Franciscan Fr. Walter Coleman, were sentenced to death at The Old Bailey for exercising their priestly functions. Their fate long hung in the balance. The fanatical House of Commons, already in fierce opposition to the King over

such matters as the "Root and Branch Bill," and the "Grand Remonstrance," urged that the said priests "be put to execution according to law." The matter was referred back by Charles to the Commons—no doubt to gain time—and meanwhile the Civil War put an end to the incident. Nevertheless, eight other priests were put to death in other parts of the Kingdom for the same cause as those condemned in London.

The example of Fr. Coleman and the other martyrs and confessors seems to have filled Fr. Henry Heath with a vehement desire to labour and die in England. He was now in his forty-third year, was doing an admirable work, not only at Douay, but far beyond its borders, and the Order was extremely reluctant to allow him to go forth on so hazardous a mission. Consent, however, was at length obtained, and he set out. His love of poverty was such that he declined the offer of secular attire which was made him, being content to have his Franciscan habit altered—as far as such apparel could be altered—into what resembled the dress worn by seafaring men at that time. He, likewise, refused the offer of a great German nobleman to defray his expenses to London. Humanly speaking, all this appears to have been a great mistake. The Civil War in England had now begun. Double vigilance was being exercised at all the ports to prevent not only the landing of "Romish Priestes and Jesuites"—that activity, of course, was only normal—but also foreign political emissaries and supplies of men, arms, and money for the King. Charles, moreover, was being denounced by the "godly" for fighting at the head of a "popish army," such numbers of Catholic lords and gentlemen had flocked to the royal standard. Every stranger, on landing, naturally aroused suspicion, and Henry Heath in his brown suit of outlandish cut, must have, indeed, been an object of, at least, curiosity all the way of his long tramp from Dover to London. On the last day of the journey, he walked forty miles along the wintry roads of Kent, arriving in town after nightfall, penniless and in a state of utter exhaustion, as may well be imagined. He was allowed to rest for a while at the "Star" Inn, Southwark, near London Bridge, but, having no means, had to leave about eight o'clock. He resolved to pass the night on the door-step of a house in the city, but the master, coming home late, took him for a would-be burglar, sent for a constable, and the weary stranger was imprisoned in the Compter. He was searched, and some Catholic writings, which were discovered sewn up in his cap, proved him to be a priest.

The capture of Fr. Heath made a great stir, despite the fact that the Royalists were sweeping all before them, and London, generally strongly Puritan, was almost daily expecting an unwelcome visit from Prince Rupert and his dashing Cavaliers. A Committee of the Commons actually went down to see and question the bold priest, who, it must be owned,

lived up to his reputation. Asked why he had come to England, he at once replied: "to convert his countrymen from their sin and heresy—even the Protestant heresy, the Puritan heresy, the Anabaptist heresy, the heresy of the Brownists, and many others." The Parliament men who were calling their sovereign "Agag," and his gallant supporters "the Sons of Belial," heard some counter plain-speaking on the religious confusion which was so largely responsible for the dissensions then rending the Kingdom. Fr. Heath was forthwith committed for trial. His case at The Old Bailey, under the 27th of Elizabeth, for being a priest and returning to England, was but a short matter, for he freely acknowledged the same. After receiving, later on, sentence of death, he bowed to the Bench and said: "My Lords, I give you thanks for the singular honour you have done me; for now I shall die for Christ." He was allowed great latitude in the matter of visitors after his condemnation, and large numbers came to him for confession or consolation. Among these were numbers of the first quality, Catholic and non-Catholic; also over forty Protestant ministers, several of whom spoke of him as a man of "great parts and learning." It was the custom in those days at The Old Bailey, and, indeed, until well into the nineteenth century, for the actual sentence of death to be pronounced on convicted prisoners not by the Judge who had presided at the trial, but some days afterwards by the Recorder of London. While awaiting the sentence of the law, Fr. Heath addressed a letter to the Guardian and Community of St Bonaventure's, Douay, which contains a passage that reads like an extract from the Epistle of St Ignatius to the Christians of Rome: "Let the executioners come, let them tear my body to pieces! Let them gnaw my flesh with their teeth, let them pierce me through and through, and grind me to the dust. This momentary suffering will work a weight of glory in Heaven. Reverend Father, pray for me, a miserable sinner, that I may be always in the wounds of the Crucified, till death is swallowed up in victory." When at Tyburn, on 17th April, 1643, he addressed the crowds, once more declaring that the only cause of his coming to England was that he "might spend his life and labours in the conversion of his country." Then, having passed about half an hour in meditation, and after reciting the hymn from the Office of St Anicetus, Pope and Martyr, whose feast it was, he uttered the famous prayer which has since found such an echo in the hearts of all who yearn for the return of Great Britain to the Faith of its fathers: "Jesus Convert England! Jesus have mercy on this country! O England turn thyself to the Lord, thy God!" He died calmly, and the quartering, etc., were not proceeded with till after life was extinct. Among the great numbers present on this occasion were the Duc de Gueldres (then Count Egmont) and M. de Marsys, an Attaché of the French Ambassador. The servants of the

Duke collected some relics of the martyr, including various small bones, cloths soaked in the blood, and the rope of execution. Some of these are now preserved in the Franciscan Convent at Taunton.

The father of the martyr, Mr John Heath, became a Catholic after his son's conversion, and going over to Douay, entered St Bonaventure's as a lay-brother. There is a tradition among the Franciscans of the English Province, that the first intimation received at the Monastery at Douay of the martyrdom of the Venerable Henry, was through a vision that appeared to his aged father. That saintly old man died at Douay, 29th December, 1652.

[Challoner: *Memoirs*, vol. ii. Gillow: *Bibliographical Dictionary, Eng. Catholics*. H. T. Bowden: *Mementoes of the English Martyrs*.]

APRIL 18

MARIE DE L'INCARNATION (BARBARA ACARIÈ,  
née AVRILLOT), THE BLESSED  
(1566-1618)

THE Foundress of the Carmelite Order in France was born at Paris, 1st February, 1566, and, like so many other great French religious, she belonged to that high official class which, before the Revolution, formed the *noblesse d'administration*, her father, the Sieur Nicholas Avrillot, being Chancellor to Marguerite de Valois, whose ill-starred marriage with Henry of Navarre was signalized by the enormous tragedy of St Bartholomew. The mother of the future Foundress was Marie L'huillier, a descendant of the famous Etienne Marcel, City Provost of Paris, who played the part of a sort of exalted French Wat Tyler during the civic broils under John II. Barbara, as a girl, spent some years under the instruction of the nuns of the Poor Clare Convent at Longchamp, and it seems that she would have entered that Order but for the opposition of her family. In 1584, she married M. Pierre Acariè de Villemor, a young gentleman of fortune, and a fervent Catholic, so fervent indeed, that he was foremost among the soldiers of the Catholic League, which certainly saved not only the traditional religion of France, but the country itself from the lasting anarchy of a divided state. Even after the knife of Jacques Clement had removed that Roi fainéant, Henri Trois, and so indirectly paved the way for Henry of Navarre, Paris prepared to resist the Huguenot King to the last ditch or rather faubourg. The fearful havoc wrought throughout the country by the militant Calvinist faction, and the readiness which its leaders had ever manifested to call in foreign armies to their aid, and even to barter away portions of the "Sacred Soil" for the sake of

the gloomy "la réforme," their creed, had greatly embittered the struggle and made the vast majority of Frenchmen determined to suffer every hardship rather than pass under the spiritual domination of Geneva and the temporal one of Elizabethan England. Pierre Acariè was one of the Committee of Sixteen which organized the resistance of Paris after Henry of Navarre's victory over the Duc de Mayenne at Ivry (1590). The final triumph of the good-natured conqueror—caused rather by his abjuration than the sword—brought in its wake temporary banishment for the most implacable of his foes, and among them the father of the subject of these remarks. He left Paris, and with it his private affairs in great disorder, a misfortune usually ascribed to his "imprudence," but which may well have been caused by the abnormal difficulties of the times, and the almost universal ruin of the individual, brought about by the age-long religious struggle. During the enforced absence of her husband from Paris, his young wife, with that practical business capacity so often to be met with in Frenchwomen, managed his affairs, arranging with his creditors and saving the remnants of the family fortune. All this time she was giving every maternal care to her young children, as well as attending to the affairs of her own soul, hearing Holy Mass almost daily, visiting the Blessed Sacrament, and setting aside a considerable portion of each day not required for domestic or business duties, to spiritual reading. Like the devout matron of the liturgical Office, she "extended her hand to the poor," giving much that she personally could ill afford to spare, to relieve the wants of a class that had suffered, as usual, the most from the late wars and semi-anarchy. Like most of the Saints, she had her own peculiar trials. While on a journey about this time, she had the misfortune to fall from the pillion of her horse and sustained a very severe fracture, which a mistaken course of surgical treatment converted into a chronic and painful malady. If Ambroise Paré was alive at this time, it may be presumed that Mdme Acariè did not consult the magician of contemporary surgery!<sup>1</sup> The capabilities of Mme Acariè and her eminent piety made her house, in course of time, the centre of all that was best in the contemporary Catholic life of France. The Salon, that focus of gilded gossip and polished intrigue, was not, as yet, known as an institution of Paris, and even if it had been, the "hotel" d'Acariè would have presented a very different Society from those which nearly a century later added so much splendour and sprightliness to the capital and reign of the Grand Monarque. The reception-room of Mdme entertained such grave and reverend personages as the saintly Mdme de Meignelay and Mme de Brèaute; the Chan-

<sup>1</sup> Ambroise Paré, whose discoveries revolutionized surgery, especially military surgery, died 20th December, 1590, aged about seventy-three. Like Claude Bernard (1813-1878), he was largely self-educated.

cellor de Marillac, whose niece founded the Sisters of Charity; St Vincent de Paul himself; and occasionally St Francis de Sales. The chief conversation invariably turned on some spiritual or charitable topic, and there can be no doubt that much of the religious good which in the succeeding century so largely transformed France, had its remote inception in the ideas and suggestions that were so frequently mooted and discussed at these semi-spiritual re-unions.

The nigh half-century of strife that had covered the country with ruins and filled the land with all kind of disorders, called for the great remedies of prayer, penance, and meditation. These were greatly expedited through the publication in 1601, of the Abbé de Breligny's *Life of St Theresa*, translated from the Spanish original by Ribera. The work was much read, and "chosen souls" found in the history of the great Carmelite Mystic that unction and consolation for which they had so long been yearning. Among these was M<sup>de</sup> Acariè herself, and it is stated that about this time she was favoured with those apparitions in which St Theresa herself bade her introduce the Carmelite Order into France. M<sup>de</sup> Acariè humbly laid a full account of these extraordinary occurrences before her spiritual advisers, including St Francis of Sales, and the general opinion was that the proposed work was from God. A sort of holy enthusiasm now manifested itself among the friends of M<sup>de</sup> Acariè, with the result that the Princess de Longueville generously offered to defray the cost of building the first house of the Order in France, the Convent in the Rue St Jacques, and on 18th July, 1602, the King, Henry IV, issued Letters-Patent authorizing the work.<sup>1</sup> The undertaking, however, was beset with difficulties chiefly of a technical and internal kind. Among the Spanish nuns who came by invitation to Paris to start the new religious life, were seven nuns, among whom were Sisters Anne de Jesus and Anne of St Bartholomew, both of whom (since declared Venerable) had aided St Theresa so loyally in the work of her famous reform. The new arrivals established the Convent of the Incarnation in the Rue d'Enfer—an incongruous name, surely, for the site of a religious house!—and such was the success of the foundation, that shortly afterwards, another Convent was opened at Pontoise, 15th January, 1605, and a third in September of the same year at Dijon. It was at this stage, however, that the difficulties referred to arose. The Abbé Peter de Bérulle, later Cardinal, who had done so much to help M<sup>de</sup> Acariè to obtain the extension of the Carmelites to France, wished the Nuns to be governed by the Jesuits, and later, also by the Oratorians, in place of the Friars of the Foundation, and, for a time, there was considerable friction, during which Sister Anne de Jesus retired

<sup>1</sup> The Bull of Institution was obtained from Pope Clement VIII, through St Francis of Sales, 23rd November, 1603.

to Brussels to found the Carmelite Convent there. In spite of these troubles, the Carmelites spread in France, so that by 1618 they possessed in that country no fewer than fourteen houses. As long as her husband lived, Madame Acariè kept her station in the world, contenting herself with aiding, by her prayers and wise counsels, the extension of the famous Order which she had done so much to bring into the religious life of her country. While attending assiduously to this great and exacting work, she was no less mindful of other needs. The famous Jesuit Father, Père Coton, her friend and counsellor in spiritual things, had spoken of the Oratorians as "necessary to France." Madame Acariè realized the concrete meaning expressed in this phrase, and, with her wonted zeal, urged on the Abbé de Bérulle, already mentioned, the necessity of introducing the Congregation of St Philip Neri into France. In November, 1611, she had the happiness—a happiness also shared by St Vincent de Paul—of seeing the Oratorians formally installed in Paris. As adviser to the superiors of the Carmelite nuns in France in the early days of the foundation, Madame Acariè was often applied to by pious girls who believed they had a vocation. In many cases the applicants had a vocation, but not to the Carmelite Order. There was in France at that time great want of good schools where young ladies could receive an education proper to their station, yet combined with solid instruction in the Faith. In conjunction with her holy cousin, Madame de Sainte Beuve, Madame Acariè formed these rejected aspirants into a body of teachers for girls. The Hotel Saint-André, a large house in one of the then suburbs of Paris, was taken as a high school, and placed under the direction of Nicoletta La Palletier, an experienced educationalist, who had founded a similiar school at Pontoise in 1599. The expenses of the establishment at the Hotel Saint-André were generously defrayed by Madame Acariè. Her relative, the before-mentioned Madame Madeleine de Sainte Beuve, powerfully aided in the work, erecting at her own cost two additions to Saint-André—a boarding school and a residence for the mistresses. Mother Frances de Bermond, of the Ursuline Convent, Marseilles, and the Foundress of the Order in France, was placed over the institution, which was intended to be an Ursuline Convent for Paris. Many young ladies of title—the De Vieuxponts, D'Ésigny, D'Urfé, De Marillac, etc., came forward as postulants, and on 13th June, 1612, the Bull of the Pope, Paul V, "Inter Universa," was issued, raising the Community of Saint-André into a cloistered convent of the Ursuline Order.

M. Acariè died a holy death in 1613. After his return from temporary exile, he had thrown himself heart and soul into his wife's good works, and had shown himself in every way a splendid father to his family of three sons and three daughters. If his widow had deeply to deplore the loss

of such a husband, she had now the consolation of knowing that she was free to fulfil her heart's desire, *i.e.*, the taking of the veil in the Order she had done so much to set up in France. Already, all her daughters were Carmelite nuns, and in 1616, she commenced her novitiate at the convent at Amiens, where one of these was then Sub-Prioress. True to the humility which had marked her whole life, she sought on this occasion "the lowest place," entering the house as a lay-sister under the title of Marie de l'Incarnation.<sup>1</sup> Her holy death occurred at the Carmelite Convent, Pontoise, 18th April, 1618. She had long, as before observed, been regarded by all who knew her as a woman of extraordinary sanctity, and in addition to the wonderful spiritual favours already described, she was gifted with the sacred stigmata, or physical impressions of the holy wounds of Our Saviour.<sup>2</sup> The cause of her beatification was introduced at Rome as early as 1627, but it was not until 1791 that Pope Pius VI, amidst the ominous clouds that too truly heralded the approaching violence of the Revolution, signed the decree enrolling her name among the *Beatæ* of the Church. Three years later an entire community of the Order, the famous Carmelite Nuns of Compiègne, were to add their names to the illustrious victims of the Jacobin Terror, and another glorious band of Martyrs to the ancient and most historic Church of France, which owes so much to the zeal and sanctity of the Blessed Mary of the Incarnation.<sup>3</sup>

[De Broglie: *La Bienheureuse Marie de l'Incarnation, Marie Acarié* (Paris, 1903). Considerable information relating to the Ursuline episode, in *St Angela Merici and the Ursulines*, by Rev. Bernard O'Reilly. (London: Burns & Oates, 1880.).]

APRIL 19

## DUCKETT, THE BLESSED JAMES, MARTYR

(?—1601). Beatified Dec. 15, 1929.

WHILE very much is due to Douay, Rome, Lisbon, and the other "foreign seminaries beyond the Sea," for keeping alive the Faith in these realms, both during the blood-stained and the bloodless epochs of persecution,

<sup>1</sup> It was, no doubt, in honour of the Blessed Marie de l'Incarnation, that her name in religion was assumed by Marie Guyard-Martin, Foundress of the Ursuline Convent at Quebec. The remains of the gallant Marquis de Montcalm, General Wolfe's opponent at the battle of Quebec, 1759, are buried in the Convent Chapel.

<sup>2</sup> Dr Imbert, in his famous treatise on cases of Stigmata (Paris, 1894), includes the name of the Blessed Marie of the Incarnation among the 321 well-established examples of this spiritual phenomenon.

<sup>3</sup> For the Blessed Carmelite Nuns of Compiègne Martyrs, 1794. See July 17.



it must not be forgotten that the press played its part, not only in keeping the remnant loyal to its religion, but also in spreading among non-Catholics a knowledge of the truth. The period of the Censorship, 1530-1694, is generally regarded in this country as an age of stagnation, as far as printing is concerned. Printing was not only under a cloud, but under a very real kind of persecution, and the printer who, but for this, might have come to be regarded as a member of one of the learned professions, actually came to be looked down upon as "a low fellow!" Despite the ban, secret presses existed in England under Elizabeth as before mentioned,<sup>1</sup> and many were the tractates and books that issued therefrom in defence of the Ancient Church. Among the printers who bravely ran the risk of fine and imprisonment in thus instructing a perverse generation, was James Duckett. He was the younger son of Mr Duckett, of Gilfortrigs, near Skelsmergh, Westmorland, his godfather being James Leyburne, Esquire, who suffered for the Faith at Lancaster in 1583. As the licensed presses were only found at York, London, and the two Universities, young Duckett, after leaving school, had to go to the Capital to learn his trade. While an apprentice, he read one of the current Catholic tractates already referred to—"The Foundation of the Catholic Religion," and, like Gibbon, he read, applauded and believed. Up to this, our apprentice is described as having been very religious, often hearing three sermons a day, and that at a time when sermons, especially the Protestant ones, often lasted two hours at a delivery, and were full of quotations from the Old Testament. Being intellectually and spiritually convinced of the truth of the ancient worship, which was the object of so much misrepresentation and abuse, young Duckett stayed away more and more from the Parish Church. This being "recusancy," a very serious offence, he was soon in Bridewell for the same, but was "bailed out" by his good master. Relapsing again, he was sent to the Compter. Once more his employer generously came to the rescue, and the obstinate 'prentice was released. He was now allowed to buy off the rest of his term of service in the printing office, and putting himself under instruction with an old priest, named Weekes, in the Gate-house Prison, was received into the Church.

Mr Duckett now turned his knowledge of printing and the book trade to account, and for several years he did much to disseminate Catholic literature among his sorely-tried co-religionists and honest inquirers, himself suffering on and off imprisonments and other trials, such as fell to the lot of the active recusant in those days. He married a widow, but of the twelve years of their conjugal life, our printer spent about nine in gaol. He was last informed against by one Peter Bullock, a bookbinder, who though in durance for recusancy, apparently, nevertheless, hoped to

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 13 and 118.

win favour by accusing one so obnoxious to the Government. Among the books found on Duckett's premises by the officers of the law, was Fr. Robert Southwell's *Humble Supplication to Her Majestie (Elizabeth)*, 1595, against a more severe enforcement of the penal laws. This and another apologetic, Bristow's *Motives*,<sup>1</sup> were alleged against him at the April Sessions, Old Bailey, 1601, but the jury, *mirabile dictu!*, returned a verdict of *not guilty*. Contrary to law and right, they were sent back by the Lord Chief-Justice, Sir John Popham, to reconsider their verdict, when they brought the prisoner in guilty. Before setting out to Tyburn, on the 19th (of April), he spoke most manfully to his wife, saying, "If I were made the Queen's secretary or treasurer, you would not weep, do but keep yourself God's servant and in the unity of God's Church, and I shall be able to do you more good being now to go to the King of Kings." His accuser, Peter Bullock, so far from gaining a reprieve—as he had hoped—was sent to execution at the same time, and when the cart was about to be drawn away, Mr Duckett, having not only forgiven him but embraced him, then exhorted his companion to "die as I die, a Catholic." Bullock merely replied, that he died "as a Christian should do." A son of the Martyr was the Rev. Father Duckett, Prior of the English Carthusians at Nieuport, while another relative was the Rev. John Duckett, alumnus of Douay, who suffered at Tyburn, 7th September, 1644, aged 31.

[Challoner: *Memoirs*, vol. ii. Gillow: *Bibliographical Dictionary of the Eng. Catholics*.]

## APRIL 20

TICHBORNE, THE VENERABLE THOMAS, PRIEST, MARTYR  
(1567-1602)

THE last two years of Elizabeth's reign were marked by "Tichborne Trials," which, if far less prolonged than the more famous one of two hundred and seventy years later, were not without their thrills. About the year 1584, a young gentleman, named Thomas Tichborne, went to Rheims to study for the priesthood. He was then in his seventeenth year, having been born in 1567 at Hartley Mauditt, Hants, and, it need

<sup>1</sup> *Motives of the Catholic Faith*, by Richard Bristow, D.D., first edition, 1574. It was subsequently published in Latin for the use of scholars at home and abroad. The author was a Fellow of Exeter College, Oxford, and in 1566, was selected, together with Mr E. Campion, afterwards martyred, to dispute before Queen Elizabeth. No doubt, the example of Campion led Bristow to consider "the Catholic claims," for he went to Douay, 1569, and graduated D.D. at the University there, 1579. He died near Harrow-on-the-Hill, 18th October, 1581, aged 43.

scarcely be added, that he was related to the famous and ancient stock, the Tichbornes of Alresford in the same county, whose ill-fated descendant, Roger Charles, or rather his obese impersonator, afforded such exciting speculations for our grandfathers and grandmothers in the early seventies. Thomas was ordained priest at Rome. His time at the English College coincided with the period of the notorious disturbances arising out of the presence of the Jesuits as directors and superiors. There were "pro" and "contra" Jesuit factions. The opposition alleged, generally, that the College was being used as a mere nursery for the Society to the utter neglect of all the rights of the seculars. Many, too, were violently opposed to the political attitude of Fr. Parsons, the "Black Pope," whose "Book of the Succession," *i.e.*, *Conference about the next Succession* (1594), advocated two rather irreconcilable principles, the "right" of the Spanish Infanta to the throne of England, and the "right" of peoples to alter the line of succession for just causes, notably that of religion. The students at the English College, with that ultra-patriotism which no penal code could quench, refused to allow the work to be read in the refectory, and openly rejoiced over the "singeing of the King of Spain's beard" by their countrymen at Cadiz and elsewhere.<sup>1</sup> In all these "broils" which, of course, greatly undermined the spirit and discipline of the College, Mr Tichborne is reported to have exerted a moderating influence. But, bad as life in England was at that time from a Catholic point of view, he was probably not reluctant to exchange the grievous domestic unrest of the "Venerable," for the more terrible, but less near and perpetual, troubles of his co-religionists at home. Upon arriving in England, he laboured chiefly in Hampshire, "among his ain folk," and in a county which even now is wild enough in parts. But from the first the new-comer must have been a marked man. His near relatives, Peter Tichborne, and the latter's son, Chideock Tichbourne, had been not only "obstinate recusants," and all for the Spanish interest—as the Jacobite Squire Western, *temp* George II, was all for the French one—but Chideock had been an active member of that chivalrous band of young knight-errants who perished on the scaffold in 1586 for their gallant, if Quixotic, attempt to save the Queen of Scots from the coterie of hypocrites and assassins, then at their wits' end for a plausible pretext for her "decent" destruction! Truly, the "days of the Reformation" were remarkable for the geniality of their social sunshine! The Rev. Thomas Tichborne had not been long in England when he was arrested and imprisoned in the Gatehouse, London.

<sup>1</sup> No wanton outrage accompanied the capture of Cadiz by the English Fleet. The women and nuns were protected by the victors, and conducted to a place of safety. Elizabeth, to her great credit, had given express orders for this. See Lingard: *History*, vol. vi., chap. viii.

His release came about under circumstances which would have afforded the press of to-day a real "sensation," and the film-producers a no less thrilling "picture." Somehow or other his cousin, Nicholas Tichborne, and a friend, Thomas Hockshot of Mursley, Bucks, got to know that the reverend prisoner would have occasion on a certain day to go down the street for examination by the Justices, and that he would be accompanied by only one jailer. So they waylaid the pair, floored the guardian and thus enabled his charge to escape. In the uproar which ensued, however, the two daring assailants were seized, and after "divers torments," both eventually paid the penalty of their generous and courageous act of rescue, at Tyburn, 20th August, 1601. The priest thus violently set at large, did not enjoy his freedom long. For he was subsequently recognized in the street by one Atkinson, "a fallen priest," who, like so many of his class at that time, had turned spy and informer. The renegade at once began shouting: "A Priest, a Priest, stop the Priest!" Mr Tichborne sought to get out of the sudden danger by replying: "I am no more a priest than you are!" but all in vain, for he was arrested and shortly afterwards condemned (17th April). He suffered at Tyburn, 20th April, 1602, together with the Rev. Robt. Watkinson, an alumnus of Douay and Rome. It is said that while walking in London with a friend, this latter martyr, who was an invalid, had been accosted by a venerable old man who remarked: "Sir, you seem to be sick and troubled with many infirmities, but be of good cheer, for within these four days you shall be cured of all." Within the time prescribed, Mr Watkinson had been arrested, tried, and condemned, and exactly on the fourth day he consummated his glorious course beneath Tyburn Tree.

[Challoner: *Memoirs*, vol. i. H. S. Bowden: *Mementoes of the English Martyrs and Confessors*.]

APRIL 26

## ST PETER CANISIUS, S.J., DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH (1521-1596)

WHILE the whole Church glories in Peter Canisius as one of the greatest of her Saints, and latest of her doctors, two nations claim him as their citizen. Peter Kanis, latinized after the manner of the time into Canisius, was born at Nymwegen, 8th May, 1521. The town, though geographically in Holland, ecclesiastically formed part of the Archdiocese of Cologne, and had the privileges of a German Reichstadt. The father of the future and second Apostle of Germany had been ennobled for his services as tutor to the children of the Duke of Lorraine, and at the time of his son's

birth, was holding the post of Burgomaster of his native town, an office which he filled no less than nine times. Peter was the eldest of several children, and with the rest of the family he had the misfortune early to lose his excellent mother, Ægidia van Houweningen. His father married again, and the second wife proved not only a very kind and considerate stepmother to the children, but her high character was not without its effect on the subject of these remarks. Peter, though sufficiently devout as a boy, loving to serve Mass and be present at religious ceremonies, yet showed much high spirit, and even waywardness, the latter happily not of a serious character. Many of his young companions were frivolous and even "dangerous," but Peter's good sense, religious upbringing and firm disposition brought him, with the help of God's Grace, unscathed through his difficult time. At the age of fifteen, Peter entered the University of Cologne, where he formed a close friendship with a saintly and sympathetic priest, Nikolaus van Esch. Among other things, Van Esch strengthened the young student's resolution in the Faith, a service much needed at that time, owing to the strife going on in the University city between the supporters and antagonists of the Archbishop Hermann von Weid (1515-47), who, after opposing the beginnings of the Reformation, ended by giving his active support to the new heresy, or rather set of heresies. In due course, Peter took his Master of Arts degree, and then commenced divinity. About the age of eighteen, he pledged himself to a life of celibacy, and prayed the Lord to "show me Thy ways and teach me to walk in them."

This being so, all plans for a career in the world were set aside, including a brilliant match, but after seriously considering the Carthusians and their holy life of prayer, silence, and mortification, young Canisius, now twenty-three, chose the Society of Jesus. He made the Spiritual Exercises for thirty days under Father Peter Faber, one of the original companions of St Ignatius, and on 8th May, 1543, entered the lately established novitiate at Cologne. On 13th June, 1546, he said his first Mass, and such was his reputation already for learning and preaching, that the following year he was named Procurator to the Bishop of Augsburg at the Council of Trent. Later, he lived with St Ignatius for six months at Rome, then was sent to Messina to teach Rhetoric in the Jesuit College there, and after a year was recalled to Rome to receive further instructions for what was to be his life-work.

Though the great schism of the West had brought about many evils in Germany, as elsewhere, and the higher ranks of the hierarchy were too often filled by ambitious worldlings, yet not a little of the spiritual decadence of the time in the Empire was directly due to a too numerous and badly-instructed parish clergy. Among the many zealous persons who wished

to see this wretched state of things remedied, was the ruler of Bavaria, Duke William IV, who in 1548-49, applied to Pope Paul III and the General of the Jesuits for assistance in the matter. The immediate proposal was to bring into a state of efficiency the theological faculty of the University of Ingolstadt, and so begin by ensuring a high standard of ecclesiastical education in one important part of the Empire, and thus set a good example that would, no doubt, be speedily followed in other directions. Among those detailed for this momentous work were Fathers Canisius, Salmeron and Le Jay. After receiving the personal benediction of the Pope on 2nd September, 1549, Fr. Canisius spent a considerable time in prayer at the shrine of the holy Apostles. Later, he wrote of this episode: "They, too, gave me their blessing, confirmed my mission to Germany and promised me their favourable protection." Before leaving Rome, he was solemnly professed in the Society in the Church of Sancta Maria della Strada, the Mass on this occasion being celebrated by St Ignatius.

When Fr. Canisius arrived in Germany the greater part of the nation had been wrested from the Faith, not only by the preaching activity of the reformers but still more by means of the press and the schools. The Catholic seats of learning had terribly declined, many had closed their doors, and even at Ingolstadt, where the new-comer now found himself, there were only some four or five students in the theological faculty who had received the necessary classical training. Indifference to religion outside was such that, as our Saint expressed it, "we could not get two people to come to Mass even if we paid them!" Like all true reformers, Fr. Canisius began the work of amelioration at home. He won over the apathetic and ill-read students by his kindness and devotion to their interests, assisted the poorer sort by financial help, and explained the nature of the interior life as expressed in the *Spiritual Exercises*. Within a very few years the apathy and tepidity of Ingolstadt had given place to fervour, and in 1552, Fr. Canisius was called upon to undertake the same kind of beneficent work at Vienna. There, as at Ingolstadt, he reformed the studies, corrected abuses, and infused the fire of religious fervour into numbers of persons, not inherently depraved, but simply grown dull and indifferent owing to bad example and want of method and interest in the scholastic routine of the place. The year that St Ignatius died (1556), Fr. Canisius was appointed Provincial of the Society in South Germany, and during the years that he held this very important office, he achieved a series of triumphs which can only be described as Napoleonic. Thanks to his negotiations and persistent, but always conciliatory, diplomacy, flourishing Colleges were established at Prague, Munich, Augsburg, Innsbruck, Tyrnau and Dillingen. All these seats of learning were free—our Saint always insisted on that—and, moreover,

each College had attached to it a "Convictus" or hostel for the entertainment of the students, who were thus saved from many of the temptations which promiscuous and unsupervised life in large towns nearly always brings in its wake.

Too late was it recognized in Scotland that much of the enormous success of the Reformation in that country was simply due to the uninstructed state of both clergy and people. The famous Catechism of Archbishop Hamilton of St Andrews (1552), had it appeared twenty or even ten years earlier, might have saved a large section of the Scottish people for the Church. A vast deal of the Lutheran triumph in Germany was directly due to the same cause. To dam one tide of loss at its source, Fr. Canisius drew up an excellent "Catechism" which appeared in April 1555. The larger and Latin version was used with splendid effect in all the Catholic high schools and by many of the parochial clergy. An abridgment in the vernacular was soon issued for children in the ordinary schools, where it had an enormous vogue.<sup>1</sup> The larger Catechism (Latin) was enlarged into a serious handbook of Theology in 1569, and it went through no fewer than two hundred editions during the writer's lifetime. It contains some 3200 references to Scripture passages and the Fathers.

Besides the epoch-making Catechism, Fr. Canisius also wrote a long and learned reply to the Magdeburg divines whose *Centuries* or ecclesiastical history was chiefly designed to illustrate the gradual corruption of the Church ever since Our Lord's time—a rather odd way of impressing the world with the truth of Christianity! To be free for this stupendous labour, Fr. Canisius was relieved of his Provincialship. Between 1571 and 1577, he produced two volumes of his reply, one dealing with St John the Baptist, in which he demonstrates that the whole life of the precursor proves, against Luther, the necessity of good works. The second book on "The Incomparable Virgin Mary" shows that the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of Our Lord's Blessed Mother finds a host of warm defenders among the early Fathers and Councils. His multifarious labours prevented the appearance of a third book to treat of St Peter and the primacy, but a few years afterwards, the *Centuries* received a continuous and overwhelming reply in the *Annales Ecclesiastici a Christo nato ad Annum*, 1198, from the pen of Cardinal Baronius. In addition to his stupendous labours as College founder and writer on theology, Fr. Canisius also made time for extensive missionary activity. He preached to large congregations at Vienna, Prague, Regensburg, Cologne, Worms, Wurzburg, and Strasburg, in addition to many smaller towns and even obscure villages. His discourses, simple yet

<sup>1</sup> In Southern Germany people often said to children, "Have you learned your Canisius?" So synonymous did the terms Catechism and the name of the holy writer become!

learned, and full of the unction which warms the heart and stimulates the mind, were mainly on the doctrines and practices assailed by the innovators. The general effect of his pastoral zeal in this direction was to bring very many lax Catholics to a life of repentance, and a no less number of Protestants to the fold of the Church. Though wisely much opposed to those public disputations on religion which were so long but erroneously regarded as admirable methods of defending and promulgating the Faith, he was chosen as the Catholic representative at the "Conferences" between Catholics and Protestants at Worms and other places. The most valuable result of these discussions was to demonstrate yet again the never-ending confusion of the new heresies, and the solid and undisturbed unity of the doctrine of the Ancient Church.

Just as when the might of the coalesced powers was driving back the French armies, 1812-14, it was necessary for Napoleon to fly from place to place to take personal command so as to secure victory for his receding legions and stem the tide of defeat, so in the great struggle for the traditional Faith of Europe, 1552-90, the presence of the Apostle of Germany seemed essential to win back vast tracts of Central Europe to the Church. By his own individual influence with many of the still wavering princes and magnates, by the enormous correspondence which he carried on with nobles, scholars, religious and even private persons, and still more by the scholarly devoted priests and solidly informed and staunch laymen educated in the Universities, Seminaries and Colleges, improved or founded by his care, St Peter Canisius made it possible for Macaulay to declare when writing nearly three centuries later that "a hundred years after the separation [from Rome] Protestantism could scarcely maintain itself on the shores of the Baltic."<sup>1</sup> More than half of the holy Roman Empire had been either preserved or reclaimed. As an expert on religious affairs in Germany, Fr. Canisius was of great assistance to the Council of Trent in more ways than one. He advised the concession of the Chalice to the laity in certain regions of the Empire owing to the long-rooted dissensions over Communion under "both kinds," and the practice was permitted by Pope Paul IV. The inconveniences arising from the grant of the Chalice, joined to the fact that the true doctrine of Our Lord's presence "under either kind alone" was well known to all Catholics of any education, soon however, led to the "privilege" being abandoned by the laity, and it was formally withdrawn by Pius V. Fr. Canisius also urged the confirming of the Religious Peace of Augsburg which assured tranquillity to the country for half a century.

One of the greatest of the labours associated with this indefatigable apostle is the foundation of the Jesuit College at Freiburg, Switzerland, in

<sup>1</sup> "Essay on Von Ranke."



1580. This famous seat of learning was largely the means of preserving the Faith over a great part of Switzerland then menaced by Calvinism. The last years of our Saint's almost incredibly active life were spent here not in teaching in the schools, but in preaching. He appeared in the pulpit at Freiburg for the last time in 1596, on the occasion of the opening of the New College, but was then described as "worn out with years and work." During the few months of mortal life that still remained, he was prevented by "a grievous dropsy" from saying Holy Mass, and with the humility that had marked his whole life, referred to himself as "a beast of burden" unable to work any more! On the Feast of St Thomas the Apostle, he received Viaticum and Extreme Unction, and that afternoon slept sweetly in the Lord, just after beholding, as it is piously believed, the vision of the Holy Mother of God in glory.

The "cause" of this great champion of the Faith in Central Europe was introduced at Rome in 1623. The long delay so often seen in the case of great servants of God occurred now, and the "Apostle of Germany" was not beatified until 1864. In his "Encyclical," of 1st August, 1897, Pope Leo XIII singled out the "Catechism" of the Blessed Canisius for special praise, describing it as "distinguished by its magnificence of style and worthy of the pen of a Father of the Church." The seal was put on this pontifical eulogy on 21st May, 1925, when the Blessed Peter Canisius was declared on the same day by the present Holy Father, a Saint of the Church and the latest of her Doctors.

[An extensive bibliography has grown up around St Peter Canisius and his career. An important *Life of the Saint—De Vita Canisii*—appeared at Munich, 1614. The Author, Raderus Sacchinus published another—*De Vita et Rebus Gestis P. Petri Canisii*—at Ingolstadt, 1616. Many German *Lives*. The latest by Metiler (Ratisbon, 1897). See also *Studies and Essays on the Work of the Jesuits in Germany*, by J. Zunge (Freiburg, 1907).]

APRIL 28

## ST PAUL OF THE CROSS, FOUNDER OF THE PASSIONIST CONGREGATION

(1694–1775)

THE early history of Paul Francis Danei presents several of the features common to the lives of many other Saints. Born at Ovada, a pretty village of Genoa, on 3rd January, 1694, the same year that was to usher into the world another and very different type of mind—François Marie Arouet de Voltaire—the early years of our Saint were spent amidst much the same

kind of personages and scenery so vividly described in the *I Promessi Sposi* of Manzoni. Luca Danei, and Anna Maria Massari, his wife, the parents of Paul Francis, had no less than sixteen children, and this huge family, as usual, appears not only to have enjoyed a sufficiency of all that was required for their station in life, which was that of the middle class, but to have lived together in that general happiness which is no small part of the effect, or rather, the earthly portion of the reward of Christian domestic life. Luca Danei was very fond of reading the *Lives of the Saints* to his children, both for edification and instruction, and this custom seems to have given little Paul and his younger brother, John Baptist, a relish for playing at being priests. After a time, the two boys began practising in private some of the austerities mentioned in the books they read or had read to them, and like the St Curé d'Ars when young, they would often gather together the children of the village and relate to them the wonderful legends and heroic virtues of their spiritual heroes and heroines. It was about this time that Paul and his young brother were saved—like the youthful St Thomas à Becket—from drowning in the River Tanaro, and by the intervention, so it is said, of the Blessed Virgin herself. They used to describe how a lady of radiant beauty had suddenly appeared to them as they were struggling in the water, and who, having brought them safely to the banks, as suddenly disappeared. In 1709, the Danei family returned to their native town of Castellazzo, having left the place many years before owing to the war between the Allies, including the Duke of Savoy on one side, and the French. Meanwhile, Paul had been for some five years studying Latin and belles-lettres under a scholarly priest at Cremolino. The next two year's of his life appear to have been passed at home, but in what occupation is not stated. It is very likely that he acted as tutor to his younger brothers and sisters, but it is certain that he was making great advance in perfection, hearing Mass daily, communicating frequently, practising severe mortification, chiefly in the matter of food and sleep, and last, but certainly not least, bearing most heroically—despite long spells of interior desolation—the apparent harshness of a confessor, who wished to “try” the now well-known holiness of the youth. Then in 1714, came a new departure. For about five centuries on and off, there had been a more or less continuous state of war existing between Venice and Turkey, but in the last-named year, it looked as if the Sultan Armet III would renew the agelong hostilities on a large and, therefore, really formidable scale. Not only the romantic city of merchant-princes and lagoons called for volunteers, but the Pope, Clement XI, added his pontifical appeal to the nations for further material aid in the shape of money and munitions of war. Very soon large numbers of soldiers of fortune and adventurers from the late armies of Louis XIV, Marlborough and

Prince Eugene—the War of the Spanish Succession being now over—were flocking to Venice and the north of Italy for this expected new crusade. Among those who caught the enthusiasm of the hour, was Paul Francis, who joined one of the Armies then being raised at Crema in Lombardy. He served, as we should now say, with the colours for a year, but there being no prospect of going to the front at the end of that time, he applied for and obtained his discharge. The truth is the hostilities which had appeared so menacing at the outset soon became merely nominal, and the “war” which had begun with so much martial display fizzled out in diplomatic negotiations.

The next several years were not very eventful, but they were most valuable to our Saint in many ways. He resumed his former life of extreme asceticism and charity towards his neighbour’s soul, catechizing the young and exhorting, and often converting, the most abandoned transgressors. He declined an advantageous marriage, and renounced a rich inheritance. His one idea now was to establish a Society dedicated to the Salvation of Souls through devotion to Our Lord’s Passion. His year in the Army amidst moral disorders and abandonment of every kind, and his experiences elsewhere, had deeply impressed him with the fact of the utter forgetfulness of vast numbers of people with regard to all that the Saviour of Mankind has done to redeem sinners. It was in 1720, that Paul Francis is believed to have had the vision of himself clothed in the black serge habit of the Passionist Congregation-to-be. This occurrence was brought to the notice of the Bishop of Alessandria, Mgr. Gattinara, and also Paul’s confessor, and it was finally agreed after a most careful investigation of the matter, that the projected Congregation had the divine approval. In November of this year (1720), Paul received the habit in question from his Lordship, and then during a rigorous retreat of forty days, he drew up the Rules of the new foundation. It was while journeying across the mountains in the depth of winter to submit the draft of these to his confessor, Fr. Columban, at Pontedecimo, that Paul of the Cross, as we must now call him, was befriended one night by some of the gendarmerie in their lonely station-hut, an act of charity which always gave the saint a special regard for policemen.<sup>1</sup> The year, 1720 therefore, is regarded as the year of foundation of the “Passionists”—or “Congregation of the Discalced Clerks of the Most Holy Cross and Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ,” to describe the title in full. The first years of his labours as Founder were passed at Castellazzo, where he, his brother, John Baptist, and the early religious of the institute, imparted Catechetical instruction and

<sup>1</sup> St Paul of the Cross is the Patron-Saint of the “Force” everywhere, and notably of the “Catholic Police Guild” of England, established under the auspices of the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster, and other distinguished personages.

spiritual exercises under episcopal sanction. In May, 1725, Pope Benedict XIII gave a verbal permission for the " Congregation " to " assemble companions and live according to the rules as drawn up." On 7th June, 1727, Paul and his brother were ordained priests by the same pontiff. The following year with the permission of Mgr. Palmieri, Bishop of Saone, they took possession of a dilapidated hermitage on Monte Argentaro near Portecole. Then occurred exactly what had happened to St Alphonsus Liguori. The few novices of the new foundation fell away leaving Paul and his brother alone except for one lay-brother. Nothing discouraged, the pair had recourse to prayer, and the fruit that comes from that and patience, and by 1737, they were enabled, with the free labour of the inhabitants of Orbitello, to complete the first Monastery or " Retreat " there, on land granted by the King of Naples. On 15th May, 1741, the Rules of the Foundation were solemnly approved by Benedict XIV, who declared: " This Congregation of the Passion is the last to come into the world, and it seems it should have been the first." By the brief *Ad Pastoralis*, 18th April, 1746, the same learned Pope raised the Passionist Institute to the rank of a religious Congregation. From this time, the record of St Paul of the Cross and his brethren is a history of constant new foundations, missions and retreats in various parts of Italy, the holy Founder himself having in eight years given the Spiritual Exercises in no less than nineteen dioceses, beginning with Viterbo and ending at Sezze. Fr. Paul prepared his sermons and discourses not only by much prayer, but also by severe fasts and the use of the discipline. The conversions he wrought were astounding. We read of notorious public sinners, desperadoes, smugglers, robbers, etc., abandoning their evil lives and living henceforth as models of penitence. But the heart and soul of Fr. Paul went out to other nations as well. It was while praying before the Blessed Sacrament in the Church of Castellazzo, that he first thought of the conversion of England. He does not seem to have met any English people, yet the ancient splendour of the Church in these realms always appealed most powerfully to his imagination. In his old age he said: " Let us pray for England. Whenever I begin to pray, this kingdom presents itself to my mind, and it is now fifty years since I began to pray unceasingly for the conversion of England to the Faith of its fathers." Not till nearly sixty-seven years after his death were his spiritual sons to come to this country, and then one of the first-fruits of their initial labours was the reception into the Church of John Henry Newman by Father Dominic of the Mother of God, which momentous event took place at Littlemore, near Oxford, 9th October, 1845. Though as far as we know, Fr. Paul was not personally acquainted with any English people at least of note it is pleasant to recall that Prince Henry Benedict Stuart, the titular Henry

IX of Great Britain, etc., more generally known as the Cardinal Duke of York, showed himself the good friend of the Passionists by building for them the Church of their Retreat on Monte Cavo, the highest point of the Alban Hills. Unfortunately, to obtain materials for this otherwise laudable work, the Royal Cardinal sanctioned the destruction of the fine remains of the once splendid temple of Jupiter Latialis which crowned the summit—an act of vandalism which has ever since drawn down on the memory of the amiable “last of the Stuarts” the condemnation not merely of antiquaries, but of all who cherish “the long glories of Imperial Rome.”<sup>1</sup>

It was in the Advent of 1770 that this laborious servant of God first began to show signs of the illness that five years later proved fatal to him. Yet he would not relax any of his good works or personal mortifications. He continued his negotiations with the Pope, Clement XIV, who had a great personal esteem for him, for the establishment of the Passionist nuns, the second great undertaking of the holy Founders, and made all arrangements for the opening of the first Convent of the Sisters at Corneto. During the last session of the General Chapter of the Congregation, what had been simply “declining powers,” developed into a serious illness, but even in this extremity, the spirit of self-denial which had ever been so salient in the life of the Saint of the Cross shone forth, and he chose to die not in a comfortable bed but on a rough, straw pallet. “Read me the Passion of Our Lord,” were the last recorded words of Fr. Paul, after receiving, with his usual fervour, the Viaticum and the other “last rites” of the Church. On the evening of that day, 18th October, 1775, the great Founder of the Passionist Congregation closed his eyes for ever to this world, and the news of his death was received in Rome and throughout Italy as that of a Saint. The expenses of the impressive obsequies in the Church of the “Retreat” where Fr. Paul had expired were borne by the Pope, Pius VI, but the sacred remains were removed in 1852 to the Basilica of SS. John and Paul in Rome. Numerous miracles and spiritual favours having been proved, the preliminary stages of “Venerable” and “*Beatus*” were passed through in 1784 and 1852 respectively.<sup>2</sup> Then on 29th June, 1867, Pius IX, in the presence of a congregation at St Peter’s, estimated at a hundred and twenty-five thousand, pronounced the formal decree enrolling the Blessed Paul among the Saints of the Church. With him were also canonized St Josaphat, martyred by Greek schismatics (12th

<sup>1</sup> No pasquinade, however, has enshrined in verse the vandalic act of the Cardinal Duke, as in the case of the Barberini Pope, Urban VIII, 1623-44, whose destruction of antique buildings, etc., for family aggrandizement evoked the famous epigram: “Quod non fecerunt barbari, fecerunt Barberini!”

<sup>2</sup> At the Process in 1784, the Cardinal Duke of York acted as *Ponente* of the cause.

November, 1623), the Martyrs of Gorcum, and S. Peter d'Arbues. Likewise, St Leonard of Port Maurice, the contemporary of our Saint, St Mary Frances and St Germaine Cousin, all of whom are noticed in these pages.

The profound interest in, or rather affection for, England ever evinced by St Paul of the Cross is said to have culminated in a vision during the last Holy Mass he ever offered, in which he saw his Religious labouring for the conversion of this country. Nothing could have been more unlikely at that time than that this, or, indeed, any other body of Religious would be found canonically established and actively engaged in the work of openly preaching Catholicism in a land where the remnant of the faithful—about 69,000—still lay under the full, unrepealed burden of the penal laws! The first Passionist to be officially sent to England, was the famous Fr. Dominic (d. 1849), already mentioned, who came in 1841. On 17th February of the following year, Aston Hall, Staffordshire, was opened as St Michael's Retreat.<sup>1</sup> St Joseph's Retreat, Highgate, was commenced in 1858, and at the present time, the Congregation possesses seven houses in England, *i.e.*, at Highgate, Broadway, Carmarthen, Evesham, Herne Bay, Harborne and St Helens.

The Rule of the Congregation, though it received several modifications, at the hands of the Congregation of Rites before being finally approved, is, nevertheless, very severe. It prescribes a fast on three days in each week, besides Lent and Advent. The Fathers rise at night for Matins, and recite at other stated times the rest of the canonical office in Choir. In addition to the usual three vows, they take a fourth, *i.e.*, constantly to remind the Faithful of the great theme of their holy foundation—Christ crucified. Hence the subject of the mysteries of the Sacred Passion forms a large part of the exercises at the missions and retreats which the Fathers so frequently preach in all the countries where the Congregation is established.

#### APRIL 28

### ST LOUIS MARIE GRIGNION. FOUNDER OF THE "COMPANY OF MARY" AND "THE DAUGHTERS OF WISDOM"

(1673-1716)

LOUIS MARIE GRIGNION is one of the many examples of the truth of the saying that nearly all priests and religious come from large families. He was the second of many children born to his parents, and of these some

<sup>1</sup> Aston Hall Mission ceased to be served by the Passionists in 1854, when it passed under the care of seculars.

of the sons became priests and three of the daughters nuns. The mother of this numerous progeny was a very devout woman, and she taught the subject of this notice early to have a true devotion to Our Lady. When confirmed, he added to his baptismal name of Louis that of Marie in honour of his "Good Mother," as he already called the Blessed Virgin. At the age of twelve, Louis went to the Jesuit College of Rennes, where he soon outshone his classmates in intellectual brilliance. Still more did he surpass them in devotion, and one account relates how he would "spend whole hours motionless before our Lady's Altar." His charity to the poor was likewise very great, and he once when a boy collected a sum of money sufficient to provide a suit of clothes for a fellow-student who was badly off.

It was the wish of Louis' father that his promising son should follow a secular career, but after many entreaties, and still more rebuffs, the latter obtained permission to study for the priesthood. By choice, apparently, he made his way to St Sulpice, Paris, on foot, distributing his pocket-money and most of his outfit to beggars on the road ! His reputation for sanctity, however, had preceded him, and upon his arrival, M. Bouin, the Superior, caused a *Te Deum* to be recited in thanksgiving for a student who resembled more an angel than a man. He spent seven years at the great Paris Seminary, where he was ordained 5th June, 1700. His first sacerdotal "Cure" was that of Chaplain to the General Hospital at Poitiers. The patients had been much neglected, hitherto, but the young priest soon wrought a wondrous change for the better. In addition to his spiritual duties, he most tenderly cared for and consoled the sick. He also formed a sort of sodality of pious girls, called "*La Sagesse*," for the purpose of instruction and prayer. After further experiences as Chaplain to the Hospital at Poitiers and as a spiritual Director among some hermits, who were still to be found in the then solitary district of Mt. Valerien (or Mt. Calvaire), near Paris, the Abbé Grignon offered himself as a diocesan Missionary to the Bishop of Poitiers. He was accepted, and henceforth many parishes in the north-west of France had the privilege of his sermons and ministrations. His discourses, generally speaking, were against the insidious heresy of Jansenism then permeating the country. This zeal, of course, raised up against him many enemies, including the very Bishop of Poitiers who had licensed him to preach. His Lordship, influenced it seems by malicious reports, soon withdrew his "faculties" from the zealous priest. At once the latter went to Rome, doing the immense journey, as usual, on foot, and after his arrival had every facility for stating his case to the Pope. Clement XI conferred upon the young champion of orthodoxy the title of "Missionary Apostolic," which meant that he could preach anywhere. It was while giving a mission at Pont-Château in the Diocese of

Nantes, that the holy Abbé conceived the idea of constructing a huge "Calvary" near the town of Pont-Château, a notion which was taken up with great enthusiasm by the people, who laboured at the work till the project was complete. When the "Calvaire" was ready to be solemnly dedicated, 14th September, 1709, an order came from the Governor of the province for the whole structure to be destroyed. His Excellency had been prevailed upon by the Jansenists that the work might be used as a look-out by robbers in time of peace and by enemies in war, and no appeal could prevail upon him to alter his decision. "Well," said the good Abbé, "God permitted me to erect this Calvary. He now allows it to be destroyed. Blessed be His Holy Name." The untiring priest now turned his steps to La Rochelle, where he converted to the Faith many of the Calvinists who, despite the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, still remained in the neighbourhood. About this time, too, he composed his treatise on *True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary*. He also drew up the Rules for the use of those whom he had in mind to assist him in his labours for souls. The "Congregation of the Daughters of Wisdom" was established at Rochelle early in 1715, but the good Father's days were now closing. While ministering at La Rochelle, some poison had been mixed with his broth by one of his many enemies among the Jansenists or Calvinists, and though he partially recovered from the serious illness which resulted therefrom, his health henceforth was shattered. He preached for the last time in the Church of St Laurent Sur Sèvre in April, 1716, but on the 5th of that month was taken seriously ill. He appointed the Abbé Mulot, one of his Missionaries, as his successor, and then devoutly received the last rites of the Church. He blessed the crowd that hung around the house, using for the purpose the cross given to him by Pope Clement XI. He went to his reward, 28th April, 1716, dying as he said he wished to die, "the Servant of Jesus in Mary."

The "Daughters of Wisdom," since their foundation, 1715, have greatly increased everywhere. They take charge of schools, hospitals, orphanages, penitentiaries, and similar institutions. They were much favoured by Napoleon, who granted them a subsidy of 30,000 francs, in addition to 12,000 francs annual grant and various privileges. The Congregation had suffered terribly during the Revolution, several of the nuns having been guillotined, and many others subjected to barbarous outrages. The Congregation, which has six houses in England in addition to others in various countries abroad, was not canonically approved by the Holy See till 1826 (Leo XII).

Like the "Daughters of Wisdom," his other Foundation, the "Company of Mary," has also expanded, and to-day its many houses are to be chiefly found in Canada, the United States and South America.



There is one house in England, at Romsey. The Fathers preach missions and retreats, and especially inculcate everywhere a tender devotion to the Holy Mother of God. The Blessed Louis Grignion de Montfort was Beatified by Leo XIII in 1888, and Canonized by Pius XII, 20th July, 1947.

APRIL 30

### COTTOLENGO, THE BLESSED JOSEPH, CONFESSOR (1786-1842)

THE year 1786, which was the birth-year of the St Curé of Ars, was also that of the Blessed Joseph of Cottolengo, born at Bra, a small town of Piedmont. His parents, Joseph Anthony Cottolengo and Benedicta Clarotti, enjoyed a sufficient fortune and so were able to give a superior education to their twelve children, though owing to extremely bad health, Joseph, who was to achieve such distinction in the religious and even civil life of Northern Italy, long found study a matter of great difficulty. He had, from very early years, a special devotion to St Thomas Aquinas, and he used to attribute a great change for the better in the matter of acquiring knowledge and also his distinction among his fellow-students, to the direct assistance of the Angel of the Schools. Even as a boy, Joseph Cottolengo was remarkable for his devotion and his love of mortification. From his excellent mother he learned to take a deep and practical interest in the poor, whom he was taught to regard, after the manner of St Francis, as his brethren. He entered the Seminary of Turin, 1802, to study for the priesthood, but for a time it was a question whether he would not have to relinquish the idea owing to what appeared to be the beginnings of consumption. The danger happily passed off, and Joseph, having gone through the various classes of learning and stages of ordination, was promoted to the priesthood, 8th June, 1811.

The Napoleonic Wars, which had been raging uninterruptedly since 1804, had called to the Eagles a vast multitude of soldiers of all races and nations, and the newly-created "Kingdom of Italy," as a subject state of the Empire, sent year by year to the armies of the great Captain thousands of recruits. Turin, like Milan, Verona and the other cities of Piedmont and Lombardy, was full of troops, including very many invalids broken

in the terrible conflicts from Austerlitz to Wagram. From the first day of his ordination, Fr. Joseph Cottolengo felt a great interest in these brave men. He was indefatigable in visiting the hospitals and the other military centres, where his wonderful kindness, cheerfulness, and sympathy soon won all hearts. He prepared many for a good death, and by his counsel and exhortation was the means of bringing back great numbers to a life of practical catholicity. Then in the midst of this magnificent apostolate a curious thing happened. The zealous Father, who solaced and strengthened wherever he went, began himself to suffer from that hideous spiritual malady—scruples! He who had calmed the fears and resolved the doubts of so many others, was now the victim of fearful qualms as to the state of his own soul! To this affliction was joined a mysterious disgust of the Confessional, and a strong wish to give up the parochial ministry altogether. Thus assailed, the good Father did the best possible thing. He prayed long and fervently before the Blessed Sacrament and obeyed implicitly the advice or rather orders of his confessor. The horrible nightmare yielded—as such attacks always do—to devotion and obedience, and instead of retiring from his parish, that of Cornegliano, Fr. Cottolengo redoubled his efforts, catechizing with much good effect, and drawing large crowds of eager hearers by his preaching, which combined in itself the fortuitous union of the practical and the ornate. In March, 1816, he took the degree of Doctor of Divinity at the Turin University, and two years later was nominated to a Canonry of the Cathedral. This dignity not only meant permanent residence in the city, but also a far greater extension of his field of work. Canon Cottolengo was not one to regard his preferment as a reasonable excuse to pass his years in a sort of stately quietude. He systematically visited the poor, saw to their spiritual and temporal wants, and spent a large part of his canonical income in purchasing food and other necessities for the really indigent. Meantime, he laboured for hours in the Confessional, where the absolution of “the good Canon,” as he was everywhere called, was eagerly sought by ever-increasing crowds of penitents. This great and fruitful work, and an intense devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, were the outstanding characteristics of this untiring labourer, but as had happened before, he about this time began again to feel the attacks of his old enemy. His state of depression became so serious that he regarded himself as utterly unfit for active parochial life, and so resolved to resign his Canonry and enroll himself among the Fathers of the Oratory. He laid the state of his mind and soul before his confessor, who, however, strongly dissuaded him from taking the step now proposed, adding briefly, but authoritatively, “That is not your vocation!” Implicit obedience and prayer again brought tranquillity, and next year (1827), the now reassured Canon was instrumental in establishing a work

of abiding charity and ever-increasing utility—the Volta Rossa Hospital at Turin. Though the city—long one of the best regulated in Italy—already possessed several fine institutions of the kind as the great hospital of St Giovanni Battista, the Spedale di Carita, Spedale della Maternita, etc., there was abundant room for another. The new foundation devoted itself especially to the care of the poor and of strangers, and the charge of the house was given to an “Institute of Pious Ladies” under the direction of Maria Anna Nasi. As usual, this work for God was early visited with several hard trials. It was oppressed by debt, and the people of the immediate neighbourhood—the Italians have or had a peculiar horror of grave sickness in their midst<sup>1</sup>—complained of the hospital as a probable centre of infection. Complaints were made not only to the “Corpo Decurionale” or Town Council, but even to the Government of the King of Sardinia, and in September, 1831, an order came down either to close the place or remove it to the country. The latter alternative was chosen, and the hospital was reopened at Valdocco, a village to the west of Turin. The transplanted foundation increased and flourished, though the house itself, Piccola Casa, had few, if any, claims to architectural distinction, and the new situation, too, was in many ways very inconvenient. It was here, in the year following the migration from Turin, that the saintly Superior, Maria Anna Nasi, died a holy death (15th November, 1832). A new annexe for two hundred and seventy male patients was opened about this time, though the voice of complaint had not ceased to continue its mean and selfish murmurs. The hospital, so it was asserted, would become a burden on the rates; the charity dispensed there would draw a continual concourse of undesirable characters to the district, etc. By this time, however, the saintly character of Canon Cottolengo and the vast beneficence of his work were widely known and appreciated, and the objections so noisily raised were soon silenced. Moreover, the King, Charles Albert, to mark his appreciation of the self-sacrificing labours of the Founder of the hospital, conferred on Joseph Cottolengo the Knightly Order of SS. Maurice and Lazarus, while Gregory XVI more than once openly eulogized the admirable work for afflicted humanity that was being carried on day and night at Valdocco.

Meanwhile, the ascetical development of Joseph Cottolengo was proceeding apace. His Confessional was besieged for hours every day, and his advice on all sorts of matters, some very spiritual, others very much the reverse, was eagerly sought by ladies and gentlemen, artisans and field-labourers, in short, by persons of all degrees. He was, in fact, the Curé d’Ars of Piedmont, and, indeed, much of his life—his recurring fits of

<sup>1</sup> See Lord Houghton’s description of Keats’s last illness and death in his well-known *Life* of the poet.

depression, his resolution, repeated from time to time, of retiring from active missionary life, the beneficent work he instituted, and the multitude of souls he guided to repentance, and even perfection, make him the close counterpart of St John Baptist Vianney. Unable to follow the eremitical life himself, the Blessed Joseph Cottolengo was instrumental in founding in Piedmont a body of hermits or pious laymen, living in solitude and following a course of prescribed religious exercises, much after the manner, it seems, of the *Solitaries of the Sambucca*—those heroes of the ascetical romance of Mr Montgomery Carmichael. God manifested the sanctity of the Blessed Joseph by giving him a rare faculty for the discerning of vocations, as well as of calming family feuds, and other social dissensions, and even of quieting ferocious animals. He died after a short illness on 30th April, 1842, at the house of his brother, Canon Louis Cottolengo at Chieri, the news of his death everywhere moving vast numbers of persons to visible sorrow and causing the almost universal ejaculation, "The Saint is dead!" The first stage of the process of his cause having been successfully gone through, Pius IX on 19th July, 1877, solemnly declared this great and holy benefactor of spiritual and temporal affliction, Venerable. The title of Blessed followed on April 29th, 1917, when Benedict XV, amidst the sorrows, carnage and perplexities of the Great War, decreed that honour to one who lives in history, and will live, as a foremost example of nineteenth century sanctity.

[*Life* in Italian, by Sastaldi. Another in English in the *Quarterly Series*, based on the preceding.]

## MAY 1

## REYNOLDS, THE BLESSED RICHARD, MARTYR

(1492?–1535)

BOTH the year and place of the birth of this one of the first and most famous of the English martyrs of the Reformation period, are uncertain. It is said that he was probably born in or about 1492, and at Pinhoe in Devonshire, though another account asserts that he came "frae the north countrie." Perhaps the fact that he was elected a Fellow of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, in 1510, would seem to indicate that he was born some years earlier than the date ascribed. At the University he made great advance in learning, especially in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, so that years afterwards Cardinal Pole described him as the only English monk well skilled in these, the languages of the Cross. In 1513, he graduated B.D. "without scholastic acts or residence," the reason given being

that he was about to enter religion, and that he would be given leave to preach by papal Bull. The Order chosen by Richard Reynolds was the Bridgettines, which had been founded at Wastein diocese of Linköping in 1344, by St Bridget, Queen of Sweden, and introduced into England in 1406 by Lord Henry Fitzhugh, who had been greatly edified by the sanctity of the members when Ambassador from Henry IV to King Eric of Sweden. Like that of the Gilbertines of St Gilbert of Sempringham (1083-1189), the Bridgetine Rule provided for dual monasteries of men and women, though kept strictly separate, the object of this arrangement being apparently the spiritual direction of the nuns, and the services of the Church.<sup>1</sup> The house entered by Richard Reynolds was the famous Monastery of Syon at Isleworth, which had been so richly endowed by Henry V in 1415, the memorable year of Agincourt. Here Reynolds remained some twenty years, displaying always great zeal, notably in the matters of hearing confessions and instructing the people. He took the degree of D.D. (Cantab.) probably not long after he went to Syon, and that great academic distinction seems to have always served as a reminder to him that he was called to exercise the office of instructor to others in all that related to faith and virtue.

Though the matrimonial troubles of Henry VIII were the talk of Europe from about 1528, it was not till 1535 that the affair entered into the life of secluded Syon. By that time, however, Henry had divorced Queen Catherine of Aragon, and taken to himself Anne Boleyn, to the great scandal of all but the comparatively few time-serving abettors of the King. In fact, not only were the people discussing the so-called marriage, but they were—especially the lower orders—freely giving their opinion about “Nan Bullen” and her scarcely less notorious sister, Mary, who, as every one knew, had also been one of Henry’s mistresses. There was not long before this a riot in the city caused by the arbitrary and heavy taxation of the Court, and during the course of the disturbance the women—ever the most violent on these occasions—had denounced the new Queen (Anne) as “the King’s common stew whore!”<sup>2</sup> Discussion on the royal divorce and its sequel being thus rife, it was impossible that it could be left entirely out of mind even in such places as Syon Monastery. Among those who boldly maintained the utter unlawfulness of the King’s action in putting away his true wife and marrying another was Richard Reynolds, now “Father” or Prior of the Monastery. All this public expression of opinion, polite or the reverse, must have been excessively galling to Henry, who, long accustomed to be treated with Oriental servility

<sup>1</sup> *A Defence of the Unity of the Church*, Book iii.

<sup>2</sup> James Gairdner, *A History of the English Church in the Sixteenth Century from Henry VIII to Mary*. London, 1904. 8vo.

and adulation by his minions, now saw with dismay the rising tide of popular condemnation. It was determined, therefore, to strike terror into the multitude by making examples from the most illustrious of the opponents of the royal policy, and among the crowd of intended victims were now numbered Prior Reynolds and the Priors of the London Charterhouse and the Charterhouses at Beau Vale and Axholme. At the preliminary examination before Thomas Cromwell, the King's Vicar-General, not only was the validity of the royal marriage made a matter of crucial test, but also the more far-reaching question of the royal supremacy, and the accused, having refused to acknowledge either of these claims, were sent for trial. That event took place on 28th April, 1535, before the Lord Chancellor Audley—"a thorough tool to the King"—and soon to be the most rapacious of the plunderers of the Church property.<sup>1</sup> Before the actual trial commenced, there was a sort of preliminary hearing of the charge before Audley and the high officials, evidently with a view to get Prior Reynolds and the rest of the accused to retract and make their submission to the King, for after reference had been made to the late Act (25 Hen. VIII. c. 21) abolishing the spiritual jurisdiction of the Pope in this country, the Chancellor, turning to Reynolds, asked him why he persisted in going against an opinion to which so many great Lords and "the whole realm in Parliament" had agreed. In his reply, which was very impressive, Prior Reynolds began by remarking that he had intended to keep silent like Our Lord before Herod, but since he was called upon to clear both "his own conscience and that of the bystanders," he would declare that he had with him in the matter "all good men of the Kingdom," besides all the historians, the holy doctors of the Church for the last fifteen hundred years, especially St Ambrose, St Jerome, St Augustine and St Gregory." He then added by way of conclusion: "I am sure that when the King knows the truth, he will be very ill-pleased, or rather, indignant against certain bishops who have given him such counsel." The actual trial, which began the following day, is chiefly remarkable for the extreme reluctance shown by the jury to convict. Resistance by juries in cases of State prosecution was extremely rare down to the famous affair of Bushell arising out of the case of *Rex v. Penn and Mead* in 1670,<sup>2</sup> while during

<sup>1</sup> Edward Foss, *The Judges of England*. Audley pulled down the magnificent priory of Christ Church, Aldgate, London, founded in the reign of Henry I, and used the materials for building a mansion for himself. To this spoliation was added the seizure of the rich monastery of Walden, Essex, and many smaller priories in the same county. He died 1544.

<sup>2</sup> A jury, having acquitted two Quakers, Penn and Mead, for preaching contrary to the Conventicle Act, each of the members was fined £26, 13s. 4d. by the Recorder of London. Bushell, the foreman, refused to pay, and was committed to prison, but was discharged by direction of Sir John Vaughan, Chief-Justice of the Common Pleas, on the ground that the cause of committal was "insufficient." See D. Nasmith, *Institutes of English Public Law*, p. 179.

the Tudor period, trial by jury, where the Crown was concerned, was the merest shadow of a form. Yet in this instance the whole panel did hold out over the word "maliciously," which, according to the wording of the late Act, seemed to be necessary in order to make the fact of the denial of the royal supremacy high treason. Even when the servile occupants of the Bench informed them—quite falsely it seems—that the word "maliciously" was not necessary to be taken into account, the jury still refused to pronounce the fatal verdict. In fact, it required a threat from Cromwell himself to the effect that further persistence would involve them in serious penalties, before their resolution gave way, and most reluctantly they brought in the required return of guilty against all the accused. On the 4th of May were witnessed the closing scenes of the tragedy that ushered in the bloody devastations which marked the schism of the nation from Catholic Christendom. The three Carthusian Priors, John Haile, a secular priest, and Prior Richard Reynolds suffered at Tyburn, one by one, the horrible penalties of treason then in vogue. Prior Reynolds was reserved till the last, meantime exhorting the crowds standing around to make prayer to God that the King, who, like Solomon, had begun his reign with such goodness and wisdom, might not, through the allurements of bad women, end by falling away. All died in their habits—a mystic coincidence plainly setting forth the hatred of order and self-restraint, which so persistently marked every stage of the rise and progress of the great religious revolution both at home and abroad.

## MAY 4

THE BLESSED JOHN HOUGHTON, THE BLESSED ROBERT LAWRENCE, AND THE BLESSED AUGUSTINE WEBSTER, CARTHUSIANS, MARTYRS.

(1487-1535)

EVER since the epoch of their glorious deaths, these three names have been held in special veneration by English Catholics. For they are those of the protomartyrs of the Faith in this country, the first heroes of that long struggle which, though apparently to end in defeat, really resulted in more than keeping alive the historic Faith of England and so enabling it to expand and blossom in the happier years of the second spring. John Houghton, the coryphæus of that blessed band, was born in 1487 in Essex, and studied at Cambridge during the Chancellorship of John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, destined, like himself, to die for St Peter's See.

After taking his degree in both the Canon and Civil Law (*laurea*

*utriusque juris*), John Houghton returned home. It was the wish of his parents that he should marry, but he was already convinced that the religious state was his vocation. After a further course of study under the direction of certain learned ecclesiastics, he was admitted to priests orders. At the age of about twenty-eight, he entered the Charterhouse or Carthusian Monastery at West Smithfield, then a semi-rural suburb of London. The strict Rule of the Order of St Bruno with its total abstinence from meat, almost perpetual fasts, midnight chanting of the Office, long silences, and other austerities, were not only rigidly observed by Fr. Houghton, but to these austerities he added various other mortifications of a personal kind, and he was, moreover, distinguished by his great love of humility. It is not surprising, therefore, that this great example of monastic virtue should have been chosen Prior of the house of his Order at Beau Vale in Nottinghamshire, 1531, but after a few months, the death of John Batmanson, the Prior of the London House, brought about the election of Prior Houghton as his successor. Within two years of his assumption of office occurred the first part of the terrible crisis in the Church of England. The King had divorced Queen Catherine of Aragon, and a recent Statute of the servile Parliament required all persons over sixteen years of age to swear that none were rightful heirs to the Crown but the children of the King and his "lawful wife, Queen Anne." Prior Houghton and his brethren of the Charterhouse were called upon by the Royal Commissioners to take the oath. The secluded Community of West Smithfield probably knew very little of the outer world and its distressing problems, but Prior Houghton replied reasonably enough that he could not see how the King's first marriage, having been solemnized in the face of holy Church and, of course, with her full sanction, could now be annulled after so many years. Upon this, he and Dom Humphrey Middlemore the Procurator were taken prisoners to the Tower.

In the Tower the two Carthusians had conferences with certain good and learned men. The names of these are not given, but the counsellors on this occasion may have been the holy Bishop of Rochester (Fisher), and the Ex-Chancellor, Sir Thomas More. Both of these had more than once declared that they saw no difficulty about swearing to the succession to the Crown, as settled by Parliament, a clear proof that the "divine right of Kings"—that particular offspring of the Reformation, at least in the form that we now know it—was no part of the political creed of these two illustrious Englishmen. Being persuaded that they might with good conscience take the oath of the Succession, the two Carthusians did so, and were released. But the night before he left the Tower, Prior Houghton dreamt that he should before long return there to win his crown.



Next year was passed the fatal Act which separated this country from the Apostolic See, and doomed the national Church to be what she has been for nigh four centuries—a lopped and withered branch, the creature of the State, the abiding prey of warring sects and of constant doctrinal uncertainty. Like all true and faithful Catholics of the realm, the holy Community of the Charterhouse felt that their hour had come. They prepared for the supreme trial which they knew to be at hand, by a solemn retreat of three days, during which the brethren confessed, and were strengthened in their holy resolution by the fervent exhortations of their Prior. “It is better for us,” said he in the course of one of these admonitions, “to undergo a short suffering here for our sins than to lay up for ourselves eternal torments.” At the conclusion of these moving preparations for the coming conflict was celebrated the Mass of the Holy Ghost, during which occurred the pretty well-known incident of the sudden “gentle wind” passing through the Chapel, which all present felt and believed to be the visible manifestation of the Holy Spirit come to strengthen them in the time of trial.

Within a few days the blow had fallen. Prior Houghton, Dom Augustine Webster, a monk of the Charterhouse at Sheen, and Prior of Axholme in Lincolnshire, and Dom Robert Lawrence, Prior of Beau Vale, were in the Tower. They had offered to take the Oath of Supremacy, and actually took it, “as far as the Divine law permits,” but Cromwell, the King’s lay Vicar-General, had roughly declared, *more suo*: “I will have no condition. I care nothing what the Church has held or taught. Will you agree to the oath or not?” No other words could have more unmistakably expressed the real motive of the royal policy, and the Carthusians at once saw how matters lay. One and all they declared they could not take the oath, for they could not abandon the Catholic Church without whose sanction St Augustine had even declared he would not believe the Gospel itself! The trial of the three Priors opened at Westminster Hall on 29th April, 1535, the point of the indictment, of course, being that they maintained that “the King our Sovereign Lord is not supreme head on earth of the Church of England.” The proceedings against the heads of a Community, so revered as were the Carthusians, caused an enormous sensation or rather indignation in London. Juries in Tudor times where State matters were concerned were the merest “forms of law,” but it required the grossest bullying on Cromwell’s part before those empanelled to try the reverend prisoners on this occasion could be terrified into returning a verdict of guilty. So overjoyed was the savage Henry at this first legal victory in the matter of the supremacy, that, it is said, he wished to attend the execution of the Priors in person. He did not in the event do so, but his servile courtiers were present almost in mass at Tyburn on the 4th

of May, to witness the first bloody drama in England's spiritual undoing. Prior Houghton suffered first. "Most Holy Lord Jesus, have mercy on me in this hour," he was heard to exclaim as the knife entered his body for the quartering part of the fearful sentence. His brave brethren, Priors Lawrence and Webster died likewise in their turn. The sufferings of the three being purposely prolonged by the use of a thick rope to prevent death by strangulation frustrating the final torture as described. With the Carthusians also died two others, John Haile (or Hall), Vicar of Isleworth and Richard Reynolds, a Bridgettine monk.

The Blessed John Houghton is described as being of under middle size, venerable of appearance and of a very attractive manner. As he and his fellow-sufferers left the Tower to go to death, Sir Thomas More, who was there for the same cause, saw the heroic band pass by his cell window, and at once exclaimed to his daughter, Margaret Roper, who was visiting him: "Lo, dost thou not see, Meg, that these blessed Fathers be now as cheerfully going to their death as bridegrooms to their marriage." The Blessed Thomas was himself to glorify Our Lord by dying for his Vicar on earth, and who can doubt but that the fortitude of these the first martyrs in that cause—the cause of ecclesiastical unity—was of the utmost value in heartening the first of the English laity to go forth and die for the same most holy end.

Dom Maurice Chauncey, whose *Historia* before mentioned is the chief authority for the lives of the Carthusian martyrs and confessors of this period, was the eldest son of John Chauncey, Esq., of Ardeley, Hertford. Anthony Wood states that he studied at Oxford, and he is said to have kept some of his terms for the Bar at Gray's Inn. Later he entered the London Charterhouse. He took the Oath of Supremacy—a weakness ever deplored by him, but in a sense, it was a "*felix culpa*," for he was thus spared to chronicle the histories of those of his Order who resisted unto death, and so save for posterity the edifying details and valuable particulars of the beginning of the Tudor Reign of Terror. In 1537, Chauncey went to Bruges and joined the exiled Carthusian Community there. He was Prior of the short-lived revived Carthusian Monastery at Sheen, Surrey, under Queen Mary, and at the accession of Elizabeth, 1558, returned to Bruges. There the exiled English Carthusians joined with the Flemish House till 1569, when they obtained a foundation of their own in St Clare Street. Dom Maurice Chauncey died at Bruges, 2nd July, 1581, but his brethren ultimately opened a monastery at Louvain. Another was founded afterwards at Nieupoort, where the Order remained till the suppression of the religious houses by Joseph II of Austria in 1783, Belgium being at that time part of the Emperor's dominions. The Prior

of Nieuport at the time of this calamity was Father Joseph Williams, who came to England. Though no mention is made of him in Oliver's *Collections* or in Kirke's *Biographies of English Catholics*, he probably was a member of the old Catholic family, the Williameses of Cheltenham. He died at Little Malvern Court, the Seat of the Beringtons, 2nd January (not 2nd June), 1797. His papers, the Seal of the Nieuport Community (*Sheen Anglorum*) and various valuable relics, are now at Parkminster, Sussex. This latter monastery, dedicated to St Hugh, Bishop of Lincoln (c. 1135-1200), one of the many canonized Saints of the Carthusian Order, was begun on the Parknowle Estate, Cowfold, near Horsham, in 1873. The building, which is in the Romanesque style, is very large and imposing, the entrance being crowned by statues of Our Lady, St John the Baptist, and St Bruno. The Chapter-Room contains life-size mural paintings of the martyrdoms and sufferings of the Fathers of the London Charterhouse, 1535-37. These fine pictures are the work of Monsieur A. Sublet of Paris, and the dresses and other details are represented with strict historical accuracy. The Chapel of St Hugh contains, among other precious relics, portions of the bones of St Thomas of Canterbury and St Bruno, and the stole of St Hugh of Lincoln. This great monastery, which, with its domains, covers about 640 acres, was, it is said, erected to afford a refuge to the members of the Order in France in the event of persecution in that country—a foresight which was entirely justified in 1902-4, when, owing to the anti-catholic legislation of M. Combes and his Government, the whole of the Carthusian Order in France was expelled. St Hugh's was opened in 1882.

[Dom Maurice Chauncey: *Historia Aliquot nostri Sæculi Martyrum*.

First published at Mayence, 1550, and many times subsequently, a fine edition appearing at Montreuil, 1888. The Latin style is of Ciceronian purity. *The Lives of the English Martyrs*, edited by Dom Bede Camm, O.S.B. *Cath. Record Society*, vol. xii, *Obituaries*. *Private Information*.]

MAY 9

PICKERING, THE BLESSED THOMAS, BENEDICTINE  
LAY-BROTHER, MARTYR

(1621-1679). Beatified Dec. 15, 1929.

THAT there was a "Popish Plot" actually afoot years before the luckless Sir Edmundbury Godfrey, Justice of the Peace for Middlesex, was found transfixed with his own sword on Primrose Hill that misty morning of

17th October, 1678, may be taken for certain, but it had, needless to say, nothing to do either with killing the "Merrie Monarch," or bringing in Louvois and the redoubtable soldiers of the Grand Monarque. Ever since the happy Restoration, there had been a more or less continuous movement among the English Catholics to better their position, to be rid, at least, of some of the more galling penal statutes which, from the accession of Elizabeth, had continued to appear with sickening regularity almost year by year on the Statute-Book. And of all the devoted lieges of the Lothario King, few deserved more in the way of such elementary justice than his "papist" subjects. The Catholic nobility and gentry had so rallied to the cause of his father, the Royal Martyr, that the Parliament men had accused "Charles Stuart" of fighting at the head of a Popish Army. Of the gallant Cavaliers who had fallen in battle from Edgehill (1643) to Worcester (1651), it was estimated that nearly half belonged to the ancient Faith. Unfortunately, the steps taken by those who "managed" the cause of the long-suffering recusants were not of the wisest kind. The two letters read out at Edward Coleman's trial (Old Bailey, November, 1678), the one relating to offers from the French King of money to obtain a Parliament more favourable to the Catholics, and the other referring to financial aid from the same source to enable the Duke of York to defend himself against the machinations of the Shaftesbury opposition, were simply fatal, and read in conjunction with the statements of Oates, Bedloe, Dangerfield, and the rest of the perjurers, were more than enough to give colour if not credit to their wildest and most villainous assertions.

But even as things were, it must have required a credulity amounting to gullibility, to have believed that Thomas Pickering, lay-brother of the Benedictine Order, was a person capable of entering into dark affairs of State, much less of encompassing the death of his hail-fellow-well-met Sovereign! Yet such was the case, and, as the saying goes, the matter would have been ludicrous had it not been so tragic.

Thomas Pickering belonged to the same ancient Westmorland stock, the Pickerings of Windermere, from which John Pickering, one of the leaders and martyrs of the Pilgrimage of Grace (1536) had come. The father of Thomas was a staunch royalist, and he had given his life for his King during the Civil War. Thomas, who was born in or about 1621, somewhat late in life became a lay-brother in the English Benedictine Monastery at Douay. When Charles II married his short, homely-looking Queen, Catharine of Braganza, in 1665, the Chapel at Somerset House—which had been first set up there by Charles I in 1625 for the use of Queen Henrietta Maria—was reopened for Catholic worship, and

the care of the place was given to some of the English Benedictine Fathers. Brother Pickering accompanied the chaplains to London, and that he was an excellent man of business may be gathered from the fact that he was appointed Procurator of the Order in London. No details, apparently, have come down relating to his career while at the Dower-House of the Queens of England, where the unattractive—and, therefore, probably neglected—Portuguese Queen spent so many hours weekly, playing at “Ombre,” a game she made popular in England, while her Lord, the King, amidst dazzling houris and brilliant rakes dallied away Paphian nights and days at Whitehall. For his services at Somerset House, Brother Pickering had a stipend of £50 a year from the Privy Purse. By all accounts he was a man of cheerful, not to say humorous, disposition, but his residence at Somerset House and office of Procurator to a great Order must, in the crisis that ensued, have made him a marked man.

When Oates, Bedloe, Dangerfield and the rest of the perjured informers came forward with the story of the plot, it was obviously necessary that they should make their tale as sensational as possible. Money—even French money—to pack a House of Commons with members favourable to the Duke of York, would not in those days have seemed so heinous a thing, and besides, most persons, at least those in the higher walks of life, knew that the piles of gold which the king squandered at the faro table and on his relays of mistresses, were certainly not provided by the normal Civil List. So nothing less than a scheme to kill the King and bring over a Popish Army to destroy the Protestantism of the realm would do if popular excitement was to be aroused, and, as the result of it, that outburst of virtuous indignation to which, as Macaulay says, the people of this country are so liable. If the King could have been got to believe this preposterous story the field would have been won. But, unfortunately for the real conspirators, Charles knew his long-suffering Catholic subjects too well, and owed so much to their tried loyalty, to put the slightest credence in the report. Rumours of the supposed intended assassination, it is said, reached His Majesty as he was sauntering, as was his wont, in the Green Park, attended by Lord Cromartie, grandfather of the Lord Cromartie of the '45, whose capture at Dunrobin Castle occurred almost on the eve of the shambles of Culloden. The bearer of the news was none other than the Duke of York himself, but Charles laughed away the glad tidings with the well-known jest: “Brother, I am sure no man in England will take away my life to make you King!”<sup>1</sup>

The die, however, was cast and very soon the whole country was in the throes of the vague terrors associated with the Oates Plot. Among the several priests and others, indicted for the alleged conspiracy against

<sup>1</sup> A. J. Hare, *Walks in London*, vol. ii. (Daldy, Isbister & Co., 1878.)

the King's life, were Brother Pickering, Fr. William Ireland, and a gentleman, named John Grove. The trial at The Old Bailey on 17th December, 1678, is chiefly remarkable for the nature of the evidence adduced. Oates and Bedloe positively swore that Pickering and Grove had been "told off" to shoot the King as he walked abroad in St James's Park, and that the Lay-Brother was to receive 30,000 Masses and Grove £1500 if the murder took place! The suborned witnesses declared further that three attempts had been made, and that His Majesty had only escaped death owing to the fact that on one occasion the flint of Pickering's pistol was loose, and that on the others, his weapon either wanted powder or ball. These details are interesting as showing that by this time flint-lock fire-arms were in common use. Though it was not till the reign of William III that the fire-lock musket was generally adopted by the British Army. Such a series of mishaps in so momentous an assassination project, ought to have exposed the story at once. Besides, Brother Pickering's whole life, as he was able to show, had not given him the slightest acquaintance with the use of deadly weapons. The Venerable William Ireland—a relation of the Penderels who had saved the King's life after Worcester—who was tried at the same time and on the same absurd charge, called several witnesses to prove that he was actually in Staffordshire at the very time it was asserted that he was encompassing the death of his Sovereign in London. But, in view of the excitement outside, and the biased charge of the Lord Chief-Justice, Sir William Scroggs, it is not surprising that all the accused were convicted, and after one or two short reprieves executed. The martyrdom of Brother Pickering—for his death was brought about through perjury and the hatred of the Catholic religion—took place at Tyburn, on 9th May, 1679. When taxed with being a priest, he replied with a smile: "No, I am but a lay-brother." Just before being turned off, he removed his cap, and said merrily to the crowd: "Is this the countenance of a man that dies under so gross a guilt?" And so he passed out of this life, like Sir Thomas More, cheerfully, and deeply mourned by all who really knew him, being, as was said, about the most unlikely man for the desperate crime that had been so falsely laid to his charge. It is well known that the Queen kept pictures of the Catholic victims of the Oates Plot in her apartments, and that in his moments of remorse the King would often kneel weeping before them, calling those they represented holy martyrs, and saying that they knew that he had been forced by public opinion to consent to their deaths, but that they were now in glory and would pray for him. This we may piously believe they certainly did, and also may hold that His Majesty's death-bed conversion, some six years later, was the blessed result of this holy intercession.

MAY 11

THE BLESSED JOHN ROCHESTER, AND THE BLESSED  
JAMES WALWORTH, CARTHUSIANS, MARTYRS.

(?-1537)

WE are not surprised to learn that the murders of the holy Carthusian Fathers of the London Charter house and of the other faithful Catholics, both ecclesiastical and lay, aroused not only throughout England but all over the Continent, the greatest resentment against Henry VIII. At Venice, especially, the people exclaimed vehemently against the persecution, and the English King was generally looked upon everywhere abroad as a second Nero. No doubt this consensus of public opinion gave even the Tudor despot good reason to pause a while, and though he probably would willingly have slaughtered the whole Charterhouse, he deemed it more prudent to proceed by other and less staggering means. Two lay Commissioners, and afterwards a number of other persons were obtruded on the monks, with instructions to harass them in every way. The silence was interrupted, the chanting of the Office day and night, disturbed, and even the privacy of the cell taken away. Many books were removed on the absurd ground of containing errors and heresies, and very soon matters became even worse. Low fellows wandered about the cloisters jeering at the religious, and now and then even striking them, while the temporal government of the house was entrusted to a lay official. The good Fathers endured all this grievous persecution with true Carthusian patience. For they had the example of their martyred Prior (Blessed John Houghton) and his two fellow-martyrs to sustain them, as well as also the teaching and remembrance of their late holy Prior, William Tynbigh or Tynbygh. This venerated Superior, who died in 1531, was an Irishman, and for sixty years he had edified the Community by his extraordinary sanctity. God had favoured him with heavenly raptures and ecstasies, and, no doubt, but for the confusion, bloodshed, and destruction brought about by the wickedness of the King, he would have been, in due course, canonized. On the anniversary of the deaths of Blessed John Houghton and his companions, four of the leading monks of the Charterhouse were deported to distant houses of the Order, still remaining in England. Of these, the Blessed John Rochester and the Blessed James Walworth were sent to the Charterhouse at Hull. Great efforts had been made to bend Fr. John Rochester to the King's will. He had been argued with by apostates such as the fallen friar, John Maydwell, and publicly preached at by an obsequious Bishop of the Court. In sending him and Fr. Walworth to Hull, it was hoped that both would immediately be induced to yield, for the Car-

thusians of Hull had submitted to Henry and taken the oath. But the two London Fathers were made of sterner stuff, and so after some months among their schismatical brethren, they were removed to York for trial for "obstinately affirming that our Lord the King that now is, was not supreme head of the Church of England on earth, but that the Bishop of Rome was and is the supreme head of the same on earth." The account, therefore, set forth by Froude (*History of England*) that they died for participating in the Pilgrimage of Grace is incorrect. The two holy Fathers were hanged but not quartered at York, on 11th May, 1537. The bloody part of the sentence, no doubt, was remitted at the urgent demand of the people, the good citizens of York often showing a great repugnance against a barbarous practice which in the south seems to have passed without much, if any, protest.

[Dom Maurice Chauncey: *History of the Carthusian Martyrs*.  
Dom R. Bede Camm: *Lives of the Eng. Martyrs*, vol. i.]

MAY 12 (?)

### STONE, THE BLESSED JOHN, AUGUSTINIAN, MARTYR (?–1538)

VERY little appears to be known of the Blessed John Stone, so little, indeed, that even the date of his martyrdom is a matter of uncertainty. The day is usually given as the 12th May, 1538. Yet in December of that year, Ingworth, one of the royal visitors of the Augustinian Monastery, parish of St George, Canterbury, to which the holy martyr belonged, made complaint of the "insolence" of one of the friars in the matter of opposing the King's ecclesiastical supremacy, and it appears that the recalcitrant person in question was none other than the subject of this notice. John Stone is believed to have been a Doctor of Theology, and to have for many years greatly edified his brethren, the Augustinian Friars, by his piety. When the King's supremacy became the law of the land, Fr. Stone was cast into prison, presumably at Canterbury, for refusing his assent to it. That he was not forthwith put to death may be taken as a tribute to his great local influence, the tyrant, no doubt, being anxious to win over a man who was held in so much popular esteem, and to strengthen a bad cause by the support of a distinguished name. In his *Dialogi Sex*, Nicholas Harpsfield, Archdeacon of Canterbury, relates that when in prison Fr. Stone, after a fast of three days, heard a voice bidding him be of good cheer, and not be afraid to suffer with constancy for the truth of the matter then in question. No narrative has come down of the martyrdom of the Blessed John Stone, the only record is the entry in the Account Book of the



Chamberlain of the City of Canterbury for the cost of the gallows, ropes, hurdle, halters, etc., required for the execution at the usual place for these grim occurrences, the Dane John or Dongeon. Perhaps other references to the tragedy are omitted through forgetfulness on the part of the officials, as the Corporation may have been then preparing for the State reception of the Royal Bluebeard's fourth wife, Anne of Cleves—"the great Flanders Marel" of Henry's coarse wit—who soon, poor lady! was glad safely to retire on a pension as "the King's adopted Sister!" In conclusion it may be added that Fr. Luigi Torelli, O.S.A., in his *Historia Ecclesiastica della Rivoluzione d'Inghilterra*, Rome, 1594, gives the day of the martyr's death as 12th May, 1538, but, as stated above, the actual date remains a matter of conjecture.

[B. Camm: *English Martyrs*, vol. i. J Stubbs: *Annals of England*.  
E. Hasted: *History of Kent*.]

MAY 13

BELLARMINE, ST ROBERT, CARDINAL, BISHOP,  
AND DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

(1542-1622)

THOUGH most persons of an antiquarian turn are aware that the grotesque, semi-globular stoneware jugs with the heavily bearded face, are called "Bellarmines" after the famous Cardinal and controversialist, whose personal appearance these "Greybeards" were at the outset intended to satirize, not many know that Chelsea Hospital was originally founded in James I's reign by Dean Mathew Sutcliffe of Exeter, as a College, chiefly to train up disputants to answer the polemical works of the same redoubtable prelate. "Controversy College," Chelsea, as it came to be known in James I's reign, does not appear to have long survived its foundation, but the *De Controversariis* of Robert Francis Romulus Bellarmine, Jesuit theologian, and Archbishop of Capua, are the mines from which will be drawn, probably for all time, the erudition required to defend the teaching of holy Church, as far as Scripture, the Fathers, and the earlier Church history are concerned.

The illustrious scholar and priest thus introduced, was born at Montepulciano, on the Tuscan Hills, 4th October, 1542. His father, Vincenzio Bellarmino, does not appear to have been of noble rank, though his mother, Cynthia, was the sister of Cardinal Cervini, who in 1555, became Pope Marcellus II, only to die after a reign of but three weeks. The future Cardinal was educated at the Jesuit College of his native town, where he acquired a wonderful facility in writing Latin—a great acquisition in an

age when Latin had not only risen again to a new life of Ciceronian purity, but had become the language of universal scholarship, familiar intercourse and diplomacy. Young Bellarmine was devoted to Virgil, and in after-life wrote poems of Augustan elegance, which are regarded as of great merit. Among these may be cited the *Pater Superni Luminis*, which forms part of the Vesper Office of the Feast of St Mary Magdalen. Like Bishop Hay and Cardinal Newman, the future master-theologian excelled also on the violin, though the instrument in use then was the heavily carved, somewhat harsh-toned, bulky variety, with which Baltazarini and his orchestra once charmed or astonished the music-loving Court of Queen Elizabeth.

It was the intention of Signor Bellarmino to make his son a lawyer—from the University of Padua, where some twenty years later the “Admirable” Crichton was to amaze professors and students by his encyclopædic knowledge and graceful accomplishments. But vocations, like good marriages, are made in Heaven, and at the age of eighteen, the future Cardinal felt himself called to the Society of Jesus, which he joined, 21st September, 1560. He studied philosophy—but did not love it—at the Roman College, and then did some teaching at Florence. It was while there, that he prayed fervently to God to cure his persistent ill health chiefly, headaches, so that he might be able to labour for the cause of the Church—a prayer which was rewarded by another half a century of life, every hour of which was fully taken up with spiritual and scholastic labours. After teaching Greek at Florence in addition to other branches of the “Humanities,” Bellarmine was sent to Padua by his Provincial, where he not only studied divinity, but also preached, though at this time but twenty-two. His erudite sermons, admirable delivery, and natural eloquence, soon drew crowded congregations. The fame of the young Chrysostom crossed the Alps, so that his presence was required at Milan by St Charles Borromeo. But divinity was already recognized as Bellarmine’s great speciality, and he was sent to Louvain to lecture on the *Summa* of St Thomas. He travelled thither in company with Dr William Allen, the recent Founder of Douay College, and a Cardinal-to-be. At Louvain he succeeded apparently, in convincing Michael Baius that his peculiar notions on grace were really heretical, and in practice would be an attempt to graft a kind of Calvinism on to the Catholic Church. Unfortunately, this timely warning either did not reach or did not impress Baius’s pupil, Cornelius Jansen, later Bishop of Ypres, and hence the posthumous publication of that prelate’s *Augustinus* and the beginning of the Jansenist heresy, the effects of which are still felt throughout the Christian world.

While at Louvain, the indefatigable student-preacher made copious notes and extracts from the Ancient Fathers and ecclesiastical writers, both Greek and Latin, which were of vast use to him when confronting the serried

polemical attacks of the non-catholic world. This compendium, if such it may be called, was afterwards published under the title of *De Scriptoribus Ecclesiasticis*. He also wrote the admirable commentary on the Psalms which has ever since been of such use to the clergy and liturgical students generally. Truly, they were giants in those days, and Robert Bellarmine, for all his physical shortness of stature, was the foremost of them!

These exacting labours, needless to say, ended in a serious illness. Change of climate, especially a return to one's own country, was a favourite remedy at that time in nearly all cases of sickness where the patient was a foreigner. So much so, indeed, that the Roman medical faculty often advised ailing students at the English College to go back for a time to their native land—the land of racks, ropes and quartering blocks! Fr. Bellarmine was ordered back to Italy by Fr. Mercurianus, the General of the Society, and not long after his arrival a complete recovery was the result.

The endless disputes about religion engendered by the Reformation, and the casting away of the principle of divine authority in the Church by the ever-increasing sects of Protestantism, called for a special faculty to deal with the multifarious objections and “difficulties” brought against Catholicism. A Chair of Controversy had about this time been established at the Roman College and Fr. Robert Bellarmine was now appointed to it. He lectured constantly to the students on the various heresies and misbeliefs that were distracting Christendom, and tossing so many perplexed individuals about “with every wind of doctrine.” The result of these lectures, carefully prepared and written down, was that *magnum opus* of polemical learning, the famous *Disputationes de Controversariis Christianæ Fidei adversus hujus Temporis Hæreticos*, in four large volumes. It is no exaggeration to say that this is one of the epoch-making works of the world. In these days of dictionaries and encyclopædias, cheap editions and popular prints on almost every subject under the sun, it is, indeed, learning-made-easy spelt with a capital *E*! But in Bellarmine's time, erudition had to be dug either out of unpublished MS.—often crabbed, faded, and, of course, unindexed, or else scarcely less painfully acquired from the mighty two-column folios in Latin or Greek, or both, so dear to that unwearying and amazingly learned age. If the Author of the *Disputationes* had written nothing else, he would have done enough to make his reputation secure for all time, but the tomes in question are but part of a literary output that might well have taxed the capacity of three or four strenuous scholars to produce.

The volumes on Controversy, of course, produced a storm of polemical opposition. Not only that, but special chairs and professorships were set up in England, Germany, and other Protestant countries to answer the champion of papistry. Nay, more, it was made a capital offence in

England even to have a copy of the work, but this did not prevent the London and University booksellers from doing a "roaring trade" in "Bellarmines," though how the law was thus more or less openly evaded is not clear. Perhaps the privilege of selling the otherwise banned book was made a monopoly, like that in sweet wines and other luxuries granted by Elizabeth to such favourites as the Earl of Essex of the tragic ring fame. Like St Thomas Aquinas three centuries before, Bellarmine was careful to state the case of his opponents before proceeding to answer them. This he did not only with "meticulous" scrupulosity, but also with what was an extreme rarity in those days—the greatest courtesy. Probably no Catholics, and very few Protestants, feel disposed to indulge in the slightest regret on account of the language used by that past-master of scurrility, Luther, in his theological passages at arms with Henry VIII. But dubbing an antagonist who does not see eye to eye with one on these matters, an ass, a liar, or a pig, is scarcely conducive to sweet reason, and the fashion set by Luther unfortunately soon became a recognized part of the disputant's stock-in-trade. To their lasting praise, the Jesuits from the first made it a rule to observe in controversy the charities and courtesies of life, and certainly in all his long years of wordy warfare the illustrious Bellarmine never forget the old adage which reminds us that the hand of iron is no softer for the velvet glove!

As if his own stupendous researches and labours were not enough, the arch-controversialist lent valuable aid to others in the matter of the making of books. He undertook the revision of Fr. Salmeron's monumental Commentary on the New Testament (1579), and assisted Pope Sixtus V in his edition of the writings of St Ambrose. He was one of the Commission appointed by Clement VIII on the new edition of the Vulgate, and he wrote the Preface which has since remained as the standing Introduction to that well-known impression which supplanted the notoriously faulty one of Sixtus V. He also wrote for the King of Poland (Sigismund III?) a short but admirable treatise on government, entitled *The Duties of a Christian Prince*. How far the excellent advice contained therein was acted upon does not appear, but in Poland, it was not so much the nominal sovereign who was at fault, as a rule, as the absurd system of government where, thanks to the insane *Liberum Veto*, a single member of the Senate could forbid any measure however beneficial or desirable.

Though authorship, especially theological authorship, and worldly affairs rarely go well together, there are notable exceptions, and Bellarmine was one of these. He accompanied Cardinal Gaetani to Paris in 1590 as secretary and theologian to that diplomatist, who went apparently as nuncio to the provisional Government of the League. The Cardinal and his *fidus Achates* managed to get into Paris, then besieged by the forces

of Henry of Navarre, who some three years later was to win the Crown of France through the Mass. The Cardinal and his able secretary experienced the horrors of a siege of Paris, sampling perforce the daily fare of cats and rats that formed the only available diet of the citizens, but all the time labouring at the negotiations which were to have so much to do with the pacification of France. Bellarmine returned home after having not only more than helped to achieve these satisfactory results, but with the sincere friendship and admiration of Henry Quatre, who, like all great men, recognized true worth and ability in others. From 1592 to 1594, Fr. Bellarmine was Rector of the Roman College, and in the latter year he became Provincial at Naples. During this last period appeared the two Catechisms, which, like his other works, met with marked and continued success.

Much against his will, but entirely in accordance with his deserts, the most renowned priest and theologian in Europe perhaps at that time, was, in March 1599, elevated to the rank of Cardinal. Despite the religious rancour of the age, there were no doubt generous souls not of the fold who felt glad that Rome had at length done honour to the claims of her mightiest champion. Notwithstanding the splendours of his new position, the "Red Jesuit," as Cardinal Bellarmine came now to be familiarly called, practised in private all the simplicity and austerities of his former life, continuing to live in a poorly-furnished room and to distribute most of his revenue to the needy. He refused the many costly gifts which custom or courtesy made usual at his reception of the red hat, and in other ways showed that he wished to be like Henry Edward Manning in our own time, "the poor man's Cardinal." In April, 1602, the burden of the Archbishopric of Capua was added to the compulsory grandeur of the Sacred College. As prelatial ruler of the famous city where Hannibal's victorious army met with its undoing, Cardinal Bellarmine proved himself a model Bishop. He preached frequently and made careful visitations, saw to the improvement of the parochial clergy and the efficient maintenance of the various educational and charitable foundations of the province. He drew up another excellent treatise, one entitled *On the Duties of a Bishop*, which, allowing for the changes which time and new conditions have wrought, still remains a most useful and edifying enchiridion in nearly all matters of episcopal solicitude.

Almost to the end, were the days of this untiring worker spent in controversies, one of them being with Fra Paolo (Pietro Sarpi), the notorious Prior of the Servites, who tried, but in vain, to get Venice to imitate the schismatical example of England, and whose *History of the Council of Trent* abounds in what looks very like studied misstatements. The other was with no less an antagonist than James I of England. At the suggestion, it is said, of Archbishop Abbot, the King had caused to be introduced into the

Oath of Allegiance, which was drawn up for the special case of his Catholic subjects, a clause in which the traditional deposing power of the Pope was styled "heretical and damnable." Now this phrase is theologically false. The doctrine of deposition may be politically inexpedient, and it has long been obsolete as a fact, but to describe it as "heretical and damnable" is quite outside the mark, and Rome condemned the oath. The King's book, *Triplici Nodo, Triplex Cuneus*, was met by the Cardinal—writing as Matthew Torti—in his famous *Apologia*. This work chiefly explained to the Stuart Sovereign the varying meanings of such terms as "heretical," "erroneous," "non-expedient," "rash," etc., and the result was that His Majesty, who prided himself on his skill in divinity, got very cross, but undoubtedly the lesson inculcated by the book was the extreme importance of knowing the exact meaning of technical words and phrases before going forth to attack any system, ecclesiastical or otherwise. The last notable work of this Lion of the Fold of Judah was the *De Potestate Papae*, which at once came into conflict with the Erastian regalism which, ever since the extravagant exaltation of the civil power by the bulk of the reformers, had established itself all over Europe as the new Cæsarism. The *De Potestate* was, of course, denounced by the supporters of lay supremacy everywhere for its calm but outspoken defence of the rights of the Holy See, and the book was suppressed in several states. Copies of the book were even burnt by order of the Parliament of Paris for its able exposure of the "rights of the Gallican Church"—to be tyrannized over by courtiers and lawyers—appealed with irresistible force to every candid mind. In 1621, the Cardinal Archbishop of Capua felt that his time was drawing near. He obtained leave to retire to prepare for the great and irrevocable change, to practise that "Art of Dying Well," in fact, to quote the title of one of his smaller spiritual works. His last days were spent in the Jesuit Novitiate in Rome, and there on 17th September, 1622, the Feast of the Stigmata of St Francis, the illustrious defender of the doctrines of the Universal Church passed to his reward. Apart from the vast learning of the deceased, his genial nature and sense of justice, even to the bitterest foes, had long been recognized, and many who had never known the illustrious scholar must have felt the poorer for the loss of such a man. He had always tried, as we have seen, even amidst the most acute controversies, to see and state the case of his opponents with perfect fairness, and to avoid those unworthy tactics and methods which do so much to embitter the contest and confuse the issues. He had shown much kindness to Galileo, but wisely advised that distinguished, but very impulsive, astronomer not to put forward as established facts what were, after all, at that time, but unproved suppositions. In this the great Cardinal showed not only the traditional wisdom of the Church, but also

that of every sensible man, and well would it have been for the famous physicist, and many of a like mind after him, if this wise and friendly counsel had been acted upon.<sup>1</sup>

The wonderful learning and industry of Cardinal Bellarmine are apt to make us forget his true sanctity. He was ever the man of prayer, seeking light from above rather than from the sources of human knowledge, and as we have seen, ever seeking the lowest place. It is now pretty generally known that but for the opposition of the Erastian governments and certain prelates of so-called Catholic countries of Europe, this illustrious defender of the Faith would have been canonized long ago. At least this is to be gathered from a letter of Benedict XIV to Cardinal de Tencin, where the reason of the delay is ascribed "to the sad circumstances of the times." The cause of the great Cardinal which was first introduced in 1627, and reintroduced in 1675, 1714, 1752, and 1832, reached a definite stage in 1923, when the Master of Controversy was solemnly declared Blessed by Pius XI on 13th May of that year. He was Canonized by the same Pontiff on 29th June, 1930, and on 17th September, 1931, proclaimed a Doctor of the Church.

[Excellent *Lives* and Biographical Notices of Cardinal Bellarmine abound in many sources. What may be described as the official *Life* appeared in 1613. It is an autobiography in Latin which the Cardinal wrote at the request of the Fathers Vitelleschi. It was reprinted (1887) by Döllinger & Reusch. Shorter *Lives* are to be found in the *Biographie Universelle*, Paris, 1841. C. Knight's *Penny Encyclopædia* (1840), and *The Catholic Encyclopædia*, vol ii. *Blessed Robert Bellarmine*, by the Rev. James Broderick, S.J. (Catholic Truth Society), admirably summarizes the chief events in the history of this mighty scholar to whom Catholic Christendom owes so much.]

MAY 14

## ST MICHAEL, FOUNDER OF THE AUXILIARY PRIESTS OF THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

(1797-1863)

It is not unlikely that even if the Blessed Michael Garicoïts had not founded a Congregation already illustrious in the missionary annals of the Church,

<sup>1</sup> The question of the Sun being the centre of the Universe had already been taught openly as a theory by Copernicus (1473-1543). Galileo's offence consisted in teaching it *as a fact* and in detriment to certain statements in Holy Scripture, notably, Josue x. 13, 14. Nearly all the great minds of the age, Catholic and Protestant, including Lord Bacon, were opposed to Galileo on this point. Galileo was pensioned by the Pope and died in his own house at Arcetri, 1642.

he might have become a second Curé d'Ars. Like the glory of the secular clergy of France, Père Garicoïts was born of poor, labouring parents, his father being Arnaud Garicoïts, and his mother, Gratiennne, both living at the time of the future Founder's birth (1797), at Ibarre, a hamlet of Basse Navarre, not far from the Spanish frontier. Michael learned to read and write at the village school, but soon had to leave to assist his parents on their little farm. After two or three years spent as a shepherd at Oneix in the canton of St Palais, he returned home to make his first Communion towards the end of 1810. But pastoral cares of the natural order were not young Garicoït's vocation. He felt strongly drawn to the ecclesiastical state. But as the aspirant to Holy Orders was quite without means, the good Curé of St Palais kindly interested himself in the lad, and got him admitted as a day pupil at the local College. After that young Garicoïts entered the domestic service of the Bishop of Bayonne, while continuing to attend the day classes of a school in the district. He studied his philosophy in the junior Seminary of Aire, and in 1819, began his divinity course in the diocesan Seminary of Dax. On 20th December, 1823, he was raised to the priesthood in the Cathedral of Bayonne, by Mgr. d'Astros, the Bishop of the diocese. Early the following year, he went as curate (*vicaire*) to the old parish priest of Cambo, where he remained two years, acquiring there a wide local reputation both as a confessor and a preacher. He established in the place a great devotion to the Sacred Heart, and also the practice of frequent Communion. The Abbé Garicoïts was recalled from Cambo in 1825 to teach philosophy in the Seminary at Bétharram, and also to restore a better spirit among the students. He soon obtained a great ascendancy over the latter, both as a spiritual director and a man of great sanctity and remarkable common sense. He also acted as Chaplain to the Sisters of the Cross at Igon, a Community of nuns founded by the Venerable Père Fournet. It is supposed that the Abbé Garicoïts got his ideas of a religious institute from these good sisters, but be this as it may, there was at this time a movement on foot for sending missionaries among the country-folk, who, remote from towns, were often left with scarcely any religious instruction. After a retreat under the Jesuit Fathers at Toulouse, in 1832, M. Garicoïts unfolded to Mgr. d'Arbon, the Bishop of the diocese, his plan for an Institution of priests for ministering to the little-cared-for masses at home and abroad, but under episcopal direction. His Lordship greatly approved of the scheme, and in 1833, M. Garicoïts, with four other priests—Pères Simon, Guémon, Chirou and Larrouy—inaugurated the great work. The success, almost from the first, was very great, and from this organization came other missionary institutes, notably the "Congregation of the Missionaries of the Immaculate Conception," who had charge of the



Sanctuary of Our Lady of Lourdes, from 1863 to 1903. The title of "Priests of the Sacred Heart," was conferred upon Père Garicoïts' Foundation in 1841 by Mgr. La Croix, successor of Mgr. d'Arbon in the See of Bayonne. The same bishop also gave the Fathers their first Constitutions. The vows to be taken were not perpetual, and the missionaries, as stated, were to be entirely under the control of the Bishop, who even nominated the Superior.

From 1840 to 1850, the Fathers of the Sacred Heart were more than occupied with the work of "evangelizing" the south, south-east and south-west districts of France. Chapels and schools were erected in out of the way localities, others rebuilt, and organized instruction given to large numbers of persons hitherto out of reach of the regular parishes.<sup>1</sup>

In 1850, a great wave of emigration passed over the Pyrenees similar to the emigration mania that set in among the Highlanders of Scotland not long after the accession of George III. In that year, great numbers of the Basque population left to settle in the Argentine, and by arrangement between Mgr. La Croix and the Bishop of Buenos Ayres, several of the Fathers of the Sacred Heart went to South America to attend to the spiritual wants of the large bodies of emigrants who were making their homes here and there across the vast plains watered by the Rio de la Plata. By 1859, a flourishing College for the rising emigrant population had been opened at Buenos Ayres under the direction of the Fathers and their assistants. Another foundation was made at Montevideo in 1861, where a fine church dedicated to the Immaculate Conception, and a flourishing school soon marked the success of the new enterprise.

In 1851, the Institute received permission to elect its own Superior, but the effort that was made to get the vows made perpetual was not successful. About 1853, the health of the zealous Founder began to break down. But for ten years longer the good Father continued to struggle on, attending to the multifarious works connected with the missionary enterprises of the Fathers in France and South America. His last year was one of almost continued suffering, which terminated on 14th May, 1863, the Feast of the Ascension, at 3 in the morning. The funeral oration of the deceased was pronounced by Mgr. La Croix, Bishop of Bayonne, who paid an eloquent tribute to the labours of the self-sacrificing and holy priest who had, as it were, gone forth into the highways and

<sup>1</sup> This spiritual destitution of many parts of France may be said to have begun with the Wars of Religion (1562-93), during which thousands of churches, schools and religious houses were destroyed by the Huguenots, and many of these were never rebuilt. Another wholesale destruction followed in the wake of the Revolution. The problem of how to reach the isolated masses of the people was one of the many vast difficulties that faced the hierarchy of the Concordat (1801), but face it the clergy and faithful laity did, and with wonderful success.

byways—especially the latter—and compelled all not hopelessly obdurate “to come in.” The cause of Père Michael Garicoïts was informally commenced in 1886 by Mgr. Ducellier, Bishop of Bayonne, and on 9th May, 1899, the Congregation of Rites signed the introduction of the Cause. On the 10th of December, 1916, Benedict XV solemnly proclaimed the heroism of the virtues of the Venerable Founder, who was Beatified by Pius XI in 1924, and Canonized by Pius XII, 6th July, 1947.

[*Almanach Catholique Francais pour 1923.* (Bloud et Gay, Editeurs, 3 Rue Garanciere, Paris.).]

## MAY 15

DE LA SALLE, ST JOHN BAPTIST, FOUNDER OF THE  
BROTHERS OF THE CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

(1651-1719)

WE are apt to forget in reading Edward Healy Thompson's *Life of Monsieur Olier* that many of the odious pictures of contemporary vice and irreligion so vividly described by the author, were by no means confined to Paris. In all the great cities of France, years after the holy Founder of St Sulpice had gone to his reward, similar reprehensible conditions and occurrences were rife owing to the terrible wars of Louis XIV, causing, as they did, demoralization, ruinous taxation, the invasion of hostile armies, and the loss of the lives—and livelihoods—of thousands. Then, the spirit of Jansenism and the fashionable vices of the age had inflicted great wounds on religion. So in most of the great towns, chiefly those of the north, there was both growing up and grown up, a vast population of vicious, and often semi-destitute youth of both sexes, whose circumstances and manners boded no good for France. To provide a Christian education, with its solid if elementary knowledge and sound moral training, for the class in question, was the work of St John Baptist de la Salle. The Founder of the Brothers of the Christian Schools was born at Rheims, 30th April, 1651—the same year as Fénelon—being the eldest of the several children of the Sieur Louis de la Salle and Nicolle de Moët de Brouillet, his wife. The Sieur de la Salle belonged to the noblesse de Robe, or the Bar and it was his wish that his son should follow the same high and exclusive profession. With this end in view, Jean Baptist received a very careful classical education at the College des Bon Enfants and at the University of Rheims, where he took the degree of Master of Arts at the unusually early age of eighteen. Two years before this, however, Jean Baptist had finally persuaded his father that his career lay in the Church and not the

Law, and had been formally installed as Canon of the Cathedral of Rheims. He had already received, at the somewhat premature age of eleven, the tonsure (11th March, 1662). Such things were done as a matter of course in France at that time, and no doubt the abuse was mainly the developed result of the Leo X-Francis I Concordat of 1516, which virtually handed over the Church of Charlemagne and St Louis to the State, to become largely one of its many departments and a rich field of aristocratic favouritism, and other unseemly anomalies. The young de la Salle, having been duly elected and enrolled a member of the ancient Chapter of Rheims, left for Paris in October, 1670—to commence his theological studies! His reading at St Sulpice was made chiefly under the direction of the famous ascetical writer, the Abbé Tronson, and, as became a future Saint and great religious Founder, our youthful Canon was scrupulous in the observance of every exercise and rule. Then came, between 1671 and 1672, what must have appeared in every way a great calamity. Jean Baptist lost both his parents by death, and it became necessary for him to return to Rheims to attend to the management of the paternal property and the future of his young brothers and sisters. While engaged on this arduous secular business, he pursued as far as circumstances permitted his divinity studies, and on 2nd June, 1672, he received the subdiaconate from Ladislaus Jonnart, Archbishop of Cambrai. He wished to resign his canonry, but this was refused. It was not until 9th April, 1678—owing to the exigencies of family affairs—that he was promoted to the sacred priesthood by the Archbishop of Rheims. He graduated D.D. in 1680. From the purely ambitious point of view, the recently ordained priest must have seemed to have had the ecclesiastical world of France at his feet. His noble birth, distinguished learning and attainments, no less than his known piety and rectitude, all pointed him out as a very likely candidate for the violet or even the scarlet robes of the exalted Gallican hierarchy of the splendid age of Louis XIV. In addition to all this, he was a man of commanding presence, with a complex countenance that somewhat reminded the beholders of his two illustrious contemporaries—the Eagle of Meaux and the Dove of Cambrai. His destiny, however, if less spectacular, was to be far more lasting and important, for he was to be nothing less than the Founder of what can be truly designated the first system of Christian elementary education in the modern sense.

No doubt the care that Jean Baptist was called upon to give to his own brothers and sisters first drew his attention to the vast importance of this work for the rising generation, but he does not seem to have at first looked upon it as his destined field of labour. There was at this time at Rheims a very worthy and learned Canon, named Nicholas Roland, to whom de la Salle was greatly attached. Canon Roland had much at heart

an orphanage and also free school for girls under the direction of the "Sisters of the Child Jesus." At his death, the Canon entrusted the care of the entire Institution to his young friend. This first lesson in school management was soon followed by another and more permanent one. In March, 1679, a lady of Rheims, named Madame Maillefer, opened a poor school for boys and committed the charge of it to a devout layman, Adrien Nyel, who had already spent many years in teaching the children of the labouring class. Madame Maillefer asked Canon de la Salle to assist in this good work, which he did, and with such success that later he was called upon to exercise his administrative ability with reference to another and similar foundation in the parish of St Jacques. The often miserable lives of poor schoolmasters in the past, so vividly portrayed almost in our own time by M. Alexandre Erckmann-Chatrian, must have also impressed de la Salle, for he now interested himself in the five masters of the schools in question, inviting them to his table, making them presents of food, money, etc., and even drawing up for their use a sort of rule of life. With the vision of the Saint and the man of sound common sense, he saw that pedagogy ought not to be a wretched drudgery, but a profession of the highest importance, and that the status and behaviour of its leaders must inevitably react, favourably or the reverse, on the pupils. But de la Salle did more than this. He invited the before-mentioned masters to live in his house, a step which brought about his first real cross in the matter, for his own brothers objected to the family mansion being turned into what would now be called, an "École Normale," and consequently left him. Then, all but two of the would-be beneficiaries, finding the semi-monastic life of the Maison La Salle too hard, left also. Nothing daunted, de la Salle obtained other candidates, trained them well, and soon found the ancestral home too small, and so another and larger house was taken near the Rue Neuve, now La Rue Gambetta. In 1683, Canon de la Salle, much against the wish of the Chapter of Rheims, resigned his stall, and the next year he distributed his own private fortune to the poor. The Founder of the Schools of the poor and humbler classes undoubtedly felt that example is better than precept, and that "God would provide." Between 1681 and 1692, the Community in the Rue Neuve may be said to have taken definite shape. A simple vow of obedience, renewable year by year, was established for the "Novices," though that name was not used, while the ordinary three monastic vows were reserved for those about whose vocation there was no doubt. The death of a very brilliant Brother, Henri L'Heureux (December, 1690) before his ordination, seems to have decided de la Salle that his Community should be for Brothers alone. The service of the altar, he was convinced, would interfere seriously with the great object of the Institute—the Christian education of the masses. From

about this time, the name, "Brothers of the Christian Schools," became the usual designation of the members, and it may be added that their characteristic habit, *i.e.*, a black cassock, thick, strong shoes, broad-brimmed hat, and in winter the *capote* or cloak, dates also from this period, being suggested, it appears, by the Mayor of Rheims as a practical dress sufficiently characteristic and suitable everywhere.<sup>1</sup> A school for very young aspirants to the Brotherhood was also established, as well as a house of studies for teachers who came from other parishes to be trained in the system which was now spreading over France. A house for retreats and holiday recreation was established at Vaugirard, near Paris, and a Sunday-School—the first in France—for the instruction not only of children but also of working youths in the book part of their trades and callings. Another school in the parish of St Sulpice was likewise opened chiefly for the children of the Scots and Irish refugees who had followed James II to France. The exiled King subsequently visited this useful foundation, and expressed himself as delighted with the methods and results of the place. Meanwhile, great afflictions were trying the holy Founder. The "invasion" of Paris by the Christian Brothers was naturally viewed with much jealousy by the proprietors of private scholastic establishments, while various false charges of maladministration of certain trust funds were also brought against de la Salle, and in November, 1702, the Cardinal de Noailles after a sort of inquiry deposed him from his Superiorship. His successor the Abbé Bricot was received with noisy opposition from the Brothers—"M. de la Salle is our only Superior—we will have no other!" they said. The righteous indignation of the confraternity ultimately carried the day, and de la Salle, who had submitted to authority without a word, remained Superior, but his troubles did not end here. The *Parlement* of Paris espoused the cause of some of the private teachers, and the Christian schools in the capital were closed, except a few for which special authorization had to be obtained from an official styled "the Precentor." But outside Paris, branches were being opened everywhere in France. The clergy of Chartres specially pleaded for a school for their city so as to counteract, as they said: "one of the chief causes of the indocility, the immodesty, the ignorance, and visible immorality of the children of the town!"

De la Salle moved about from place to place wherever his presence seemed to be required, either to consolidate his epoch-making work, or to compose difficulties. He lived at times at Grenoble, Rouen, Marseilles

<sup>1</sup> Apart from the *rabat* or "fall," the habit of the Christian Brothers is not a survival, as supposed by some, of the ordinary French ecclesiastical dress of Pre-Revolution days. Until 1789, French parish priests wore usually the ordinary male attire of the professional class, *i.e.*, black coat, knee-breeches and stockings, with buckled shoes, to which was added the *rabat* and the short *feriola* or cloak when out of doors. The awkward and not very sightly cassock for everyday dress did not, it seems, come into general use till after the Concordat, 1801-2.

and other towns, always cheerful, patient, helpful, and heroic. The secret of this was, needless to say, his extraordinary sanctity. His spirit of poverty we have seen, and to this he added the great virtues of constant prayer, mortification of the senses, notably at meals, and perfect resignation to the clouds and crosses which, like a furnace of fire, tried, and tried for years, this magnificent soul. He resigned the Superior-generalship of the Christian Brothers, May, 1717, after urging on the General Assembly to give its vote "to him who is the holiest or wishes to become so"—one who "has zeal with prudence, light with charity, and firmness with gentleness." The choice fell on Brother Bartholomew. The last years of the great Founder were spent at St Ton, and there on the morning of Good Friday, 7th April, 1719, he yielded up his soul to his Maker. "I adore in all things, the will of God in my regard," were the last words of him who so conspicuously throughout his life of nearly eighty years had lived up to that glorious but most difficult ideal. His sacred remains were interred in the Chapel of St Suzanne in the Church of St Sever. They were removed to the Church of the Brothers at St Ton in 1734, and though disturbed by a revolutionary mob in 1793, were not, happily, destroyed, for even the deluded followers of the Jacobin demagogues respected the body of him who had been in every sense the true and never-failing friend of the distressed. The coffin was again removed in 1881 to the Chapel of the Brothers School at Rouen, and lastly in 1906—owing to the closing of the Christian Brothers Schools in France by the irreligious and absurd fanatics who tyrannize there in the name of *Liberté, Egalité* and *Confraternité*—the body of the Blessed Founder was taken to the Mother-House of the Institute at Lembecq-les-Hal, Belgium.<sup>1</sup> Jean Baptist de la Salle was solemnly canonized by Leo XIII, amidst the rejoicing of the whole civilized world, 24th May, 1900, when not only Catholics, but educationalist leaders everywhere, paid glowing tributes to the great and self-sacrificing genius who had done so much for the moral and intellectual progress of Europe and the World. For though "Little Schools" had been opened in France as far back as the thirteenth century to extend education among the people, the growth of these had been almost stifled by the horrible Hundred Years War, which the criminal ambition of the Plantagenet Kings of this country forced on unhappy France. Then again, the Society of "Writing Masters," established in Paris, 1570, to teach reading, writing, Latin, and arithmetic, were for the better classes rather than the

<sup>1</sup> The latter-day misrulers of France would do well to recall the words of Brother Martieu to the Republican Judges, after being condemned to death by the Revolutionary Tribunal at Rennes, during the "Terror" of 1793: "I direct a free school. If your protestations of love for the people are sincere, if your principles of fraternity are not a vain or hypocritical formula, my functions justify me, and, far from being imputed to me as a crime, they give me a sacred claim on your gratitude."

poorer ones.<sup>1</sup> St Jean Baptist de la Salle aimed at giving sound and general instruction in the vernacular, leaving Latin to be taught only to those pupils who expressly required it. It is this feature of his system that would seem to make the Saint the real originator of our modern primary education, many of the now accepted principles of which are to be found laid down in the admirable *Conduite des Écoles*, which he left as his written legacy and guide to his spiritual children. In conclusion, it may be said that the Institute of the "Brothers of the Christian Schools"—to give them their proper title—is now found spread all over the world, the Brothers numbering over sixteen thousand and the pupils more than three hundred and thirty thousand. It was the Bull of Pope Benedict XIII that elevated this momentous organization into a religious Congregation—a landmark in the history of the Brotherhood—which took place in 1725.

MAY 19

WRIGHT, THE BLESSED PETER, S.J., PRIEST, MARTYR  
(1603?–1651). Beatified Dec. 15, 1929.

It is possible that Cromwell, like William III after him, would have adopted, had he been left to himself, a let-alone attitude towards the "Popish malignants," as the Catholics were styled by his fanatical followers, but the active intolerance of the latter made persecution inevitable. Father Peter Wright, who was destined to suffer for the Faith under the Puritan regime, was born at Slipton, in Northamptonshire, about 1603, and had the misfortune at an early age to lose his father. The poverty brought upon his mother and brothers and sisters by this calamity made it necessary for the future missionary priest and martyr to obtain some employment while still of school age, and he, therefore, took service in the family of a country attorney, where he remained, apparently, for several years. While with the lawyer he is said to have conformed to Protestantism, as far as attending the Parish Church went, but it is almost certain that he did not give up his religion, for when nearing man's estate he conceived the extraordinary idea—for one in his situation—of a pilgrimage to Rome! On the way thither, he came in contact with the Jesuit Fathers at Liège, by whom he was instructed—some say reconciled—and under their advice he went on to Ghent and there spent two years in the study of the Classics in the College of the Flemish Province of the Society of Jesus. There was some notion of sending him to Rome, but Mr Wright

<sup>1</sup> It was the Corporation of these "Writing-Masters" that so greatly opposed the Saint and his Brothers, as already described, an opposition which caused the Parliament of Paris to ban the schools opened by the latter.

preferred to enter the Society at Watten. While a novice there, he applied himself diligently to ascetical study and practices of devotion and obtained a complete mastery over what had been a tendency to irritability. With the zeal characteristic of apostolic men, he spent much of his leisure time going about among the village folk of the district, catechizing the children and encouraging young persons generally to persevere in piety and virtue. At the close of his theological course, Mr Wright was appointed Prefect of St Omer, a position very much against his private inclination, but which he accepted in the most perfect spirit of obedience. He soon had his reward in the form of a mission which exactly suited his zealous nature. The Thirty Years War, which was now nearing the end of its long and devastating course, had brought to the scene of action a vast number of auxiliary regiments and corps made up of military adventurers and others in the pay of one or other of the many contending powers. In the English regiments in the Low Countries were, of course, very many Catholics, for although the Government of this country was giving its support to the Protestant interest, the struggle by this time had become almost entirely political, so much so, that Pope Urban VIII saw nothing specially un-catholic in the policy of Cardinal Richelieu in sending French Armies to oppose those of the House of Hapsburg. To supply chaplains to these diverse "foreign legions" was one of the beneficent labours of the Superiors of the Jesuit Provinces both Flemish and English, and Father Wright was now detailed to go as Chaplain to the regiment commanded by Sir Henry Gage. Sir Henry, who belonged, as before stated,<sup>1</sup> to the ancient Catholic family represented by the Gages of Firle and the now extinct Gages of Hengrave, soon acquired a great affection for the new chaplain, who, during his stay with the army, effected much good among the soldiers to whom he ever proved himself a true spiritual father and friend. When Sir Henry was recalled to England by the King (Charles I), after the commencement of the Civil War, Fr. Wright accompanied his friend and patron home. He went with the brave Colonel to Oxford, when that experienced officer was appointed Governor of the Academic City of the Isis, and officiated as his chaplain down to the time of the gallant Cavalier's death in the cavalry action at Culham Bridge (1644). He then became chaplain to another staunch Royalist, the Marquis of Winchester, famous in the history of the time for his protracted defence of the family mansion, Basing House, against the forces of the Parliament. The Marquis, who, like all his house, was a devout Catholic, retained Fr. Wright in his family till 1650-1, when, owing largely to the presence of Charles II in Scotland and his dynastic activities in the north, there was a great increase of vigilance on behalf of the Parliamentary Government, not only against

<sup>1</sup> See page 28.



Royalists, but against those who were regarded as their natural allies—"the Priests of Baal!" as the fanatical left wing of the Commonwealth termed the Catholic Clergy. Up to this time—the penal laws notwithstanding—the houses of peers had been exempted from sudden and arbitrary search, but this privilege was no longer allowed under the Government of "Old Noll," and on Candlemas day (2nd February), 1651, a number of men in the pay of the authorities raided the mansion of the Marquis in London, just as the family was about to assemble for Holy Mass. In fact, if the Marquis had not barred their way for a few minutes, the priest-hunters—for such they proved to be—would have seized the Chaplain in his vestments and carried him off! He had just time to unvest and get as far as the roof of the house, but was quickly discovered and apprehended. He was committed to Newgate where already several other priests were awaiting trial for their religious character.

The trial of Fr. Wright was delayed somewhat owing to the fact that an important witness against him was not immediately forthcoming. This was none other than Thomas Gage, a brother of the late Sir Henry Gage, and who from a Dominican had not only turned Puritan, but seemed to be filled with an almost diabolical hatred against his former co-religionists. His other brother, the Rev. George Gage, a priest, however, so far won him over on this occasion as to make him promise not to give any evidence of a material nature against Mr Wright or the Rev. Mr Dade, Prior of the Dominicans, who was to be tried at the same time. Thomas kept his word as regards Prior Dade, who was, wonderful to say, acquitted, but broke it as to Mr Wright. This witness, it seems, had an old grudge against his late brother's chaplain, who had once rebuked him for his scandalous life. Two other witnesses, Mayo and Wadsworth, also deposed against the accused, and as the rule established by the judges more than a century later, requiring absolute proof of priesthood in these cases, was of course not then in force, a very strong case was in consequence made out for the prosecution. No counsel was allowed accused persons in those days in either treason or felony, save to argue points of law and examine witnesses, and when called upon by the Lord Chief Justice Roles for his defence, Mr Wright said very appositely, "that the persecutors of old might as well have objected to the Apostles and 'primitive priests' coming into their countries and preaching contrary to the established laws.<sup>1</sup> And if it should be said he continued, that he—the prisoner—had not preached the Gospel, but errors contrary to the Gospel, he would only say that all manner of heresies and false beliefs were openly taught in this land, and as none were persecuted but the Catholic religion, it was a clear

<sup>1</sup> Full defence by Counsel in cases of High Treason was not allowed till 1696 (7 and 8 Wm. III, c. 3), and in those of Felony, not till 1836 (6 and 7 Wm. IV, c. 114).

sign that that religion was the truth." These remarks seem rather to have impressed the jury, for they were some time in coming to their verdict, which was that of guilty. After receiving sentence of death the following day, Fr. Wright returned to his cell where, until his execution, he was visited by great numbers of persons, including many of the first distinction, some anxious to confess to him, others to obtain small keepsakes from him or to have his advice and benediction. On the morning of his death 19th May, 1651, he said Mass in his cell, which was served by his friend the Rev. Mr Cheney, who had been acquitted at the same sessions for want, it seems, of evidence as to his priesthood. Great crowds lined the streets all the way to Tyburn, and as the Martyr passed the Mansion of the Marquis of Winchester, in the Oxford Road, that noble lord and all his family were on the balcony to obtain the blessing of the holy Father as he passed by. The number of spectators at Tyburn was estimated at twenty thousand, including many coaches filled with personages of noble rank. Before submitting himself to the executioner, Fr. Wright delivered an impressive address containing the following passage: "Gentlemen, this is a short passage to eternity; my time is now short. I have not much to speak. I was brought thither charged with no other crime than being a priest. I willingly confess that I am a priest, a Catholic, and as you call it, a Jesuit. This is the crime for which I die; for this alone I was condemned and for propagating the Catholic Faith which is spread through the whole world, taught through all ages from Christ's time, and will be taught for all ages to come. For this cause I most willingly sacrifice my life, and would die a thousand times for the same if necessary, and I look upon it as my greatest happiness that my most good God has chosen me, most unworthy, to this blessed lot, the lot of the Saints. This is a grace for which so unworthy a sinner could scarce have wished, much less hoped, for, I now beg most humbly and as fervently as I can of God to expel from you that are Protestants, the darkness of error, and enlighten you with His truth. And you who are Catholics pray for me, and with me up to the end, and in Heaven I will do as much for you." The body of the Martyr was allowed to hang till life was extinct, before the quartering, etc., were proceeded with. The sacred remains were not exhibited on gates and other public places as was the general custom, but delivered to his friends, and sent over to St Omer for interment in the Chapel of the College of the English Jesuits in that City.<sup>1</sup>

[*Life*, by Challoner, based apparently on the *Memoir of the Martyr*, published at Antwerp by an eyewitness, the year of the Martyrdom.]

<sup>1</sup> The body of Fr. Wright was removed to Liège in 1762. After the execution, the Sheriff of London, a very courteous gentleman, allowed the many Catholics present to remove the head and members of the Martyrs saying: "bury them with all the honour you wish!" Foley: *Records, S.F. Series*, li., lil., lv., p. 550.

MAY 20

## TAIGI, THE BLESSED ANNA MARIA

(1769-1837)

MOST of the Saints whose lives illustrate heroic virtue practised in the domestic circle were either labourers or servants, or great personages, such as kings and queens, lords and ladies, the former finding their perfection chiefly in great diligence and obedience, and the latter in those gracious acts of charity and Christian munificence, which have added so much that is pleasingly spectacular to Church history. But the career of Anna Maria Taigi brings out in bold relief the wonderful holiness achieved by a poor married woman, the mother of seven children, and surrounded by exactly the same cares and solitudes which, despite the passing of centuries and the advent of new conditions, are ever with us to remind us of the limitations and dependence of human existence.

The holy Matron of Rome of the latter eighteenth and early nineteenth century was born at Sienna, 29th May, 1769, where her father, Luigi Gianetti, was in business as a chemist. Six years later this easy-going man failed in business, owing, it seems, to a too great credit allowed to people who took his pills and powders much faster than they paid for them! The "good apothecary," after this reverse, left the place of his financial disaster for good, and settled in Rome, where he became a "gentleman's gentleman," *i.e.*, butler to a noble family, one of the patricians houses whose glass coaches, gorgeous liveries and stately contemporary dress are familiar to us from the paintings of Alexander Magnasco and Pompeo Batoni. Meanwhile, his little daughter attended a school kept by the Maestro Pie, where she remained as a day-pupil till she was thirteen. She then went as apprentice to two women who followed the trade of wool-winding. The time not spent at this occupation was passed at home picking up those details of housework, the right mastery of which makes all the difference between the smooth or rough working of a house! Her father greatly appreciated his little daughter's good cooking and housewifely ways, and once jokingly asked her where she learnt it all. "Mother taught me some of it," came the reply. "Then I always say a 'Hail Mary' to ask the Blessed Virgin to help me and everything goes right!"

After a time Anna Maria became a housemaid to Donna Maria Sera at the Palazzo Maccarani where her father was employed.

Among the friends of the great family there, were the Principi Chigi, whose ancestral Palazzo on the north side of the Piazza Colonna, contains one of the finest picture galleries in the world. Among the servants of the then head of the noble house, was a handsome, hot-tempered, but

good-hearted footman, named Dominico Taigi, and before long he became enamoured of the equally attractive looking maid of Donna Maria. Both domestics, as good Catholics, prayed to know the will of God, and being assured of their vocation to the married state, the nuptials took place at the Church of S. Marcello, 7th January, 1790.

Husband and wife appear to have been very suited to each other, notwithstanding certain marked differences of temperament, which in a union not sanctified by the constant practice of religion, would undoubtedly have led to much mutual unhappiness. It is the practice of the Faith, of course, that saves families and ecclesiastics alike from shipwreck. Both the vocation of the altar and the vocation of the domestic hearth must be constantly fortified by prayer and the sacraments, and without these the fairest earthly appearances, and the most favourable conditions are powerless to prevent tragedy sooner or later.

Anna Maria, as we have said, was very happy in her married life, and though intensely devout, had no desire to adopt that curious semi-secular, semi-religious attire which so many good people think necessary in order to pursue holiness in the world ! We know what the St Curé d'Ars not only thought but said about this queer "singularity," and doubtless Anna Maria shared the same kind of sentiment. But she wanted her life, as wife and mother, to be one of uncommon holiness, by performing all her duties in this state extraordinarily well, and seeking every occasion afforded her to practice the supernatural. Her first essay in this direction was to discard the showy jewellery which every Italian woman of the middle and lower ranks of life considers a necessary part of her dress, at least on festive occasions. Her husband, strangely enough, acquiesced in this act of self-renunciation. All her life, Anna Maria used to regret—or bewail rather—the harmless pleasure she formerly took in these little vanities, and would speak of the natural girlish complacencies in question almost as great penitents have spoken of their previous moral disorders ! Such expressions are easily understood by all who know something of the pursuit of sanctity and how in the light of the things of eternity, not only the things of time but the hours spent in trifling with them, appear as mere "bubbles of wind" and "childish follies," as Bishop Challoner phrases it in one of his *Meditations*.

It has been said that when army officers in England "get religion," they usually "get it very badly !" "Getting religion" in England, since the Great Apostasy in the sixteenth century, has alas ! inevitably meant that ! Puritan grimness, absurdly long sermons, kill-joy Sundays, and prohibition of the simple pleasures of life, have ever followed in the wake of those who attempted to "convert" the masses of this country without the blessing and co-operation of the Catholic Church. Had Anna Maria

Taigi not been a Catholic, she would have degenerated most probably into a second Mrs Varden! Certainly Dickens's portraiture of that very forbidding Protestant woman makes us thankful in more ways than one that our Saint was born south of the Alps and not on this side of the English Channel.

When the family were around her, Anna Maria was the life of the house, nothing was neglected, but everything was ready as required and she herself was the picture of cheerfulness. She always gave her husband the first care, when he returned from serving at the great house, and while he was with her he was all in all to her, and no doubt she was to him. Conjugal affection, fostered by grace and supported always by the special strength and blessing imparted by the "Great Sacrament," grows with time, and is as mutually precious after half a century as on the bright day of the bridal. The practical destruction of Christian marriage by the Reformation—which as far as this country goes, was cradled in adultery—was, as we know to our cost, one of the greatest calamities inflicted on the world, and the direct source of very many of our present-day social evils.

After her husband, the model matron devoted all her domestic life to the children. She attended them to school, taught them their prayers, became their adviser and consoler, and devised for their amusement a variety of little pleasures, such as picnics, and visits to places of interest, usually churches and shrines in country places near Rome. Though strict and even severe when occasion demanded it, Anna Maria never forgot that the true happiness of a Christian home is, after all, the fairest memory anyone can have, and that firmness is not the less efficacious for being concealed by kindness! But the time not given to matronly duties was spent in prayer and devotion. The Mystery of the Nativity and the Passion of Our Lord were her constant meditations, and she loved to make the Stations of the Cross in some empty church, where the sorrow which this moving spiritual exercise nearly always evokes, could be indulged in without exciting attention.

Her confessor, Padre Angelo, a Servite Father, who seems to have had an interior warning as to the greatness of this elect soul, ordered her to communicate daily, a very rare privilege in those days, and her reception of the Blessed Eucharist is described as marked by various signs, all indicating the interior transports of her soul. But these "signs" did not end here. Among the many divine favours vouchsafed to her by God, was that of foretelling future events. It is said that for some forty-seven years before her death, a mysterious globe which expanded into a glorious sun, crowned with thorns, appeared to her from time to time, showing her as in a radiant mirror, not only the events of the world, but the state of the consciences of men. Thus, she described long before they occurred, the seizure of Rome by the French, 1797, the Captivity of Pius VII under

Napoleon (1809-14), and even the fall of the temporal power (1870). She likewise predicted the subsequent rise and triumph of the Church. She also foretold many purely secular events as the "July Revolution" of 1830, and even such matters as the plots of the Carbonari, and other secret societies which were afterwards so rife, especially from 1816 to 1832.

In addition to the gift of prophecy, that of miracles was also added. This includes a long list of such instances from the cure of a Dominican nun who suffered from cancer, to the cure of the Ex-Queen of Etruria, Marie Louise de Bourbon, who had for years suffered from epileptic fits. But while obtaining from God relief for others, this wonderful woman had herself much to endure. Sick headaches, which became much worse on Fridays, and almost unceasing rheumatism, were her constant "crosses," and, of course, like nearly all souls who are trying to serve God extraordinarily well, she had long spells of spiritual dryness. "She lived through long years with this accompanying train of suffering," says Cardinal Carlo Maria Pedicini, "save during rare moments, when it pleased Our Lord to give her some bright gleams of divine consolation." The Cardinal who, like many other prelates and notabilities of Rome, knew the Saint well, was among those who afterwards deposed to her heroic sanctity. The "dear Saint," as the people of Rome spoke of her after her death, began to fail in October 1836. To the great joy of herself and her family the Holy Father gave leave for Holy Mass to be said in her room weekly by Don Raffaele Natali, a devout priest who had long been the friend of the Taigis, and to whom we owe many of the most edifying details of this extraordinary and consoling life.<sup>1</sup> For nearly a year, Anna Maria struggled with death, but the end came on 9th June, 1837, after this wonderful exponent of the practical and the mystical had received the last Holy Sacraments, and given her final instructions to her surviving children. "Always keep Jesus Crucified before your eyes," she said, "and may His precious Blood be the object of your devout adoration. . . . Be tenderly devout to the Blessed Virgin. She will play a Mother's part to you when I am gone." The body of the "Valiant Woman" was interred in the cemetery of St Lorenzo, and very soon the place of sepulchre became the object of ever-increasing pilgrimages.<sup>2</sup> The cause began to be officially inquired into in 1852, and among those who deposed to her heroic virtues were her husband, two daughters and a number of others, including three Cardinals and several lesser prelates. Pope Pius IX declared her Venerable, 8th January, 1863, and on 30th May, 1920,

<sup>1</sup> He died at Rome, at a very advanced age, in 1871.

<sup>2</sup> They were removed later to the Church of Our Saviour of Peace, and in July, 1865, to the Church of the Trinitarian Order, S. Crisogno in Trastevere. Cardinal Stephen Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury (d. 1228), took his title from this Church.

Benedict XV enrolled her name among the Blessed. No doubt all Catholics who have at heart the subject of Christian domesticity which is after all, the foundation of a Christian life, earnestly pray that the day may not be far off when this pattern of Holy Motherhood and every wifely virtue, may be raised to the altars of the Church.

[*Anna Maria Taigi, The Roman Matron, 1769-1837.* (Burns & Oates, 1873). *A Mystic in the Home (Bl. Anna Maria Taigi),* translated from the French, by Katherine Hervey. (Catholic Truth Society).]

## MAY 22

FOREST, THE BLESSED JOHN, FRANCISCAN-  
OBSERVANT, MARTYR  
(1473?-1538)

IF Father John Forest was, as surmised, sixty-five at the time of his martyrdom, he must have been born in 1473.<sup>1</sup> At the age of seventeen he entered the Franciscan Monastery at Greenwich, and some nine years later, proceeded to the House of his Order at Watergate, Oxford, where he probably took his Doctor's degree, as he is styled by that academic distinction in his last disputation. He was, no doubt, already sufficiently distinguished for learning and general abilities, for in January, 1525, he was deputed by Cardinal Wolsey to preach at Paul's Cross, a comminatory sermon reminding his brethren, the Franciscans, that all religious under solemn vows who left their monastery without due permission incurred the penalty of excommunication. The Cardinal, as Legate, had proposed to visit the Franciscan House at Greenwich. The Friars alleged an exemption from such legatine visitations granted them by Leo X, and in protest some nineteen of the community had quitted the cloister, but some of these were later arrested and suffered a kind of mild imprisonment at the Cardinal's Palace at Whitehall.

The proximity of the Royal Palace at Greenwich to the Friary, brought the latter place much into contact with the Court, and both Henry VII and his son seem to have been as fond of the brown-clad sons of St Francis as were afterwards the last Stuarts. In 1526-7, Fr. Forest received the post of Confessor to Queen Catherine of Aragon, and that sorely-tried princess became so much attached to the Order that she expressed a wish to be buried in one of the Churches of the Foundation. The Fathers generally, openly espoused the Queen's cause, and subsequently (1532)

<sup>1</sup> Chambers's *Biographical Dictionary* gives the date of birth as circa 1474.

Friar William Peto—later a Cardinal under Queen Mary—publicly denounced from the pulpit the evil counsellors who had abetted the King in the matter of the divorce. Of course, Henry was furious, but no gibbets or axes, *mirabile dictu*, were resorted to at the moment. Fr. Forest, who saw the King—a stormy interview doubtless—actually succeeded in putting His Majesty “by his purpose,” which was that of “suppressing their Order throughout England.” A French Visitor of the Order came over, sent by arrangement with the Father-General, to prevent the repetition of any further cause of “irritation” to the King, but the times for the Franciscans, as for every one else who possessed a conscience, were fraught with the gravest danger. A man’s worst enemies, as the Gospel tells us, are those of his own household, and the truth of the adage was again to be demonstrated. Fr. Forest was now, it seems, Warden of the House at Greenwich, but he had incurred the enmity of two discontented Friars, Fr. John Lawrence and Brother Richard Lyst. Lawrence not only sought to curry favour with the Court by preaching a sermon before the Brethren—who greatly resented it—in favour of the divorce, but he and the lay-brother just named set themselves to formulate a series of accusations against the Warden and the Community in general. No doubt, the strong feeling of the Friars against the iniquitous divorce and their very frequent and free expressions anent “Nan Bullen,” were the chief substance of the charges now made against them by the traitors in their midst. The upshot of the whole affair was that Fr. Forest was first deposed from his Wardenship, and sent north—probably to the Friary at Newcastle—and then in 1534 the whole of the Franciscan Order in England was suppressed. The Houses were for the time handed over to various other Orders, but a number of the Fathers and Brothers who refused “to change their habit,” were cast into the common jails. It has been stated that Fr. Forest was also thrown into prison at this time, and that he continued therein until the day of his martyrdom. This is not correct. He was imprisoned certainly, and then enlarged, a circumstance which has given rise to a (probably) well-grounded supposition that he took some kind of qualified oath of submission to the “King’s Grace” in the affair of the Supremacy. “As far as the law of God allows,” “Saving the rights of my Order,” and similar phrases were common subterfuges enough at that time, when men found themselves between the Royal Devil and the deep sea of sheer apostasy! Even Henry himself, it is clear, had employed at least once a kind of mental reservation. For in his letter to Tunstall, Bishop of Durham, who—greatly daring—had written protesting against the “Supreme Head” clause of the new regal title, the King condescended to explain that the style only referred to the position of the Sovereign as feudal lord over the clergy in *Temporals*!



(Wilkins: *Concilia*, iii., pp. 762-65). Whether Fr. Forest subscribed or did not subscribe to the oath, he lived for some time at the Grey Friar's Convent in Newgate Street, then presided over by Thomas Chapman. The Community had "conformed," and with them the Ex-Warden lived, praying and studying, and being in much repute as a confessor. But it was well known that his private opinion was entirely against the schismatical policy of the day. Also, that he was writing a treatise on the Supremacy, which authority he told his penitents belonged to the Pope and not to the King. It was, therefore, resolved by Cromwell and the other royal advisers to get direct evidence against Forest by means of some of those who confessed to him. After one or two useless attempts, a sufficient case against the Friar was established, through a wretched creature, believed to be one Waferer, who declared that Forest had asserted to him that "the King was not the Supreme Head of the Church." The famous Father Confessor was thereupon apprehended and subsequently subjected to an elaborate examination on the whole matter.

Undoubtedly, the Lutheran heresy was beginning to affect the religious mind of the country very much at this time, and Cranmer, the Archbishop of Canterbury, since the death of Warham, was probably deeply tainted with it. Forest had been after his last arrest closely questioned as stated, on various points of doctrine chiefly relating to the Supremacy, and four articles of accusation had been drawn up against him. These were :

- (1) "That the Catholic Church is the Church of Rome, and that we ought to believe out of the same."
- (2) "That we should believe in the Pope's pardon for the remission of our sins."
- (3) "That we ought to believe and do, as our fathers have done, aforetime, fourteen years past."
- (4) "That a priest may turn and change the pains of Hell of a sinner truly penitent, contrite of his sins by a certain penance enjoined him, into the pains of Purgatory, which said articles be most abominable heresies, blasphemies against God, and contrary to Scripture and the teaching of Christ and His Apostles, and to abhor any true Christian heart to think."

The last article is a Lutheran misrepresentation. It makes out that by means of a penance given by the priest, a soul can be taken out of Hell. Actually, the Church teaches that by absolution, following on confession, accompanied by sincere repentance, the eternal punishment due to mortal sin is commuted to a temporal one—a very different thing. It is not easy

to describe in brief, actually what happened. Forest was arraigned before the Court of the Archbishop (Cranmer) on a charge of heresy. That the fourth article, as stated, is heretical, is obvious to any well-instructed Catholic, and while adhering firmly to the first three, Forest, it is said, should have demurred to the fourth on account of its faulty wording and misstatement. Instead of that, he abjured the Articles verbally, probably because he thought them so interwoven that the heretical part, the fourth, vitiated the whole. He was remanded back to prison, and meanwhile had leisure to converse with several Catholics. He consequently refused to sign his abjuration, no doubt on account of the first three articles which, being perfectly Catholic, would be condemned by him through this act. This refusal was enough. He became "a relapsed heretic" at once, and was condemned to the flames.

So on 22nd May, 1538, was witnessed the curious spectacle of a Franciscan Friar going to Smithfield to suffer both for *treason* in maintaining the Pope's spiritual supremacy, and apparently for *heresy* in not formally abjuring what was actually a Lutheran perversion of the teaching of the Catholic Church on the subject of sin and its punishment. The burning of the Martyr over a slow fire near the St Bartholomew's Spital Gate was witnessed by a vast concourse, including the Lords of the Privy Council, the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of London, and the prime nobility in town. Latimer—unforeseeing his own subsequent fate—preached the dying sermon, but was reminded by Forest that he himself had held very different opinions about the Pope's authority years before! He ended by exclaiming: "Open thou thine eyes, take example from that Holy Bishop of Rochester and the Blessed Thomas More, who renounced the goods of this world and chose rather to die than to lose their immortal souls."

Fr. Forest was suspended from a gibbet and slowly burnt to death. He refused to draw his feet from the fire when the flames mounted up, but said many prayers in Latin, the last being the *Domine miserere mei*.

As is tolerably well known, a theatrical incident was introduced into the martyrdom, that of the burning of the ancient wooden image of St Derfel, patron of the Church of Llanderfel in the Diocese of St Asaph. This "satiric touch" may have been dictated by the iconoclasm then beginning to make its appearance in the already spiritually distracted realm, a species of vandalism which found expression in the destruction of the Holy Rood of Boxley, and other venerated memorials, or it may have been an allusion to the fourth of the articles which Forest was supposed to have countenanced. For the ill-instructed Welsh peasants, or some of them, then, it is said, believed that an offering to the statue of St Derfel, popularly known as Daval Gadarn, or Gathern (Derfel the Strong), would release a damned soul from Hell! The charred remains of Friar Forest were buried,

in all probability, within St Bartholomew's Hospital, or more likely in the adjoining Church of St Bartholomew the Great. That he died like Cardinal Fisher, Sir Thomas More, and the rest of the Catholic Martyrs of this period, for the authority of the Apostolic See, is clear from the popular doggerel which declared:—

“ And Forest the Friar,  
That obstinate liar,  
That wilfullie shall be dead,  
In his contumacie  
The Gospel doth denie,  
The King to be supreme head.”

Various letters of a spiritual character, are extant, written by Friar Forest to Queen Catherine of Aragon, Elizabeth Hammon, her lady-in-waiting and Dr Thomas Abel, sometime her chaplain, and a martyr to be (30th July, 1540). In one of these letters to the Queen, written when the Friar believed himself to be on the eve almost of his death, occurs the following: “ I earnestly beg your steadfast prayers to God, for whose Spouse we suffer torments, to receive me into His glory. For it have I striven these four-and-forty years in the Order of St Francis. Meanwhile, do you keep free from the pestilent doctrine of the heretics, so that, if even an angel should come down from Heaven and bring you another doctrine from that which I have taught you, give no credit to his words, but reject him, for that other doctrine does not come from God.”

MAY 22

RITA, ST, WIDOW

(1386-1456 ?)

If St Rita belongs to that wonderful band of elect who were holy from their cradles, it must be said that she required every available help that sanctity gives, to have enabled her to endure the trials and difficulties with which most of her life was filled! She was the daughter of parents, both nearing middle age at the time of her birth, and the author of the Latin memoir of the Saint says that shortly after this event (1386), a swarm of bees was seen to come and go several times to and from the cradle—a portent which was taken as indicating that the career of the child was to be marked by industry, virtue and devotion. The father and mother of Rita were themselves very pious, and from their laudable habit of composing the quarrels and differences among their neighbours, they were known as the “Peacemakers of Jesus Christ.” Little Rita as she grew

up, seems to have acquired a great deal of this spirit of the supernatural, for she showed little if any inclination for games, seeking her recreation chiefly in prayer and visits to sacred shrines—an exercise, by the way, which—granted the proper disposition—brings with it a wealth of real enjoyment and satisfaction quite wanting to other and more secular amusements. This being so, it is not surprising to learn that Rita, as she neared womanhood, felt that her vocation lay in the convent rather than in that of domestic life. We are not aware of the circumstances that led her parents to oppose this apparently obvious course, but oppose it they did, and Rita submitted, even so far as to please them by marrying a man whom all accounts describe as exceedingly bad-tempered and something worse! It is the teaching of the Church that the grace of the Holy Sacrament of Matrimony, if corresponded with by a good life, works miracles, almost, in the way of establishing and perpetuating conjugal happiness. Acerbities of temper, temperamental differences, and all the other difficulties arising out of the necessary variations of human nature, are, under God's influence, toned down and adjusted, provided always Holy Mass, prayer and the sacraments are not forgotten—for “wheresoever two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.” So Rita tamed her rough spouse, and for two-and-twenty years lived harmoniously (*concorditer*) with a husband who, like most quarrelsome individuals in the days when sword and stiletto ever sharp, hung from every Italian gentleman's belt, perished in a feud. Such a death in the Italy of the Decamerone and the Republics, and, indeed, till well into our own time, usually meant a prolonged vendetta, and, of course, the two sons of the dead man at once took up the quarrel. Meantime, poor Rita was in despair, and finding her expostulations useless to prevent further effusion of blood, she had recourse to prayer, earnestly beseeching God to take her boys from this world rather than permit them to live on stained by homicide. The mother's prayer was heard, and the two youths shortly afterwards died edifying deaths, forgiving their father's slayers and resigned to God.

The way was now clear for our Saint to satisfy her long yearning for a conventual life. After due consideration, she applied to be “accepted” by the Augustinian nuns at Cascia, but was informed that the custom was only for women who had never been married, to be received as postulants. The time was to come when not only widows were to enter religious orders of their own sex as a matter of course, but even occasionally to found them, as in the case of St Jane Francis de Chantal and the Nuns of the Visitation. Again did Rita have recourse to prayer, and it is related that the night following her second great “storming of Heaven,” St John the Baptist, to whom she had a great devotion, appeared to her,

accompanied by St Augustine and St Nicholas of Tolentino, and these three Saints conducted her to the convent, where the Superiors, who had been similarly warned, received her with great kindness. The new postulant entered upon her life in religion with characteristic zeal and thoroughness. She disposed of her family property as alms to the poor, and in addition to the ordinary mortifications prescribed or permitted by the rule, she added others of great severity, wearing a hair shirt, fasting rigorously on bread and water and taking the discipline at intervals. The Passion of Our Lord was her constant meditation, and while recalling the manifold sufferings of the Man of Sorrows, she often seemed to be carried away by mingled grief and devotion.

In the midst of such wonderful progress on the road to perfection, this pattern to the community was afflicted by God after the following mysterious manner. She was meditating one day on the Passion before the crucifix, when she apparently, accidentally, wounded her forehead by striking it against some of the no doubt very realistic thorns in Our Lord's crown. The injury caused by the hurt developed into a serious ulcer, one most painful and unsightly, so unsightly, in fact, that for many years Sister Rita had to make her devotions alone! She accepted this great trial in the light of an additional penance sent her by God, and it was about this time that many spiritual and temporal favours are said to have been granted to various persons as the direct result of the prayers of this wonderful religious, the fame of whose sanctity had already extended far beyond the convent walls. The extraordinary fact, too, that her garden—which, in common with the rest of the nuns, she had allotted to her—produced beautiful roses and ripe figs in the depths of an abnormally severe winter, was taken as an additional sign that the unceasing prayers and heroic virtues of Sister Rita were blessed beyond measure, even in this world. The last years of the Saint were marked by a most painful and lingering illness—cancer doubtless—which as in the case of all her other seeming misfortunes she employed as another means of forwarding her greater sanctification. At the approach of death, she received with wonderful fervour the last rites of the Church, and then, as it is piously believed, at the call of Our Lady, she breathed forth her spotless soul to God on 20th May, 1456.<sup>1</sup>

The sacred remains long after death yielded a most sweet and refreshing odour, and many miracles have been recorded as the fruit of her powerful intercession. The *cultus* of the wonderful nun of Cascia spread far and wide, notably in Spain, where she has since been known as “La Santa de los imposibles!” She was Beatified by Clement XII, though as far back as 1637, a Mass and office were granted in her honour by

<sup>1</sup> The *Life* in the Breviary Office of the Feast, gives 1457 as the year of St Rita's death.

Urban VIII. Finally, on 24th May, 1900, Pope Leo XIII enrolled her name among the Saints—the Saints it may be added, whose virtues shone as stars both in the world and in the cloister.

[Cardi : *Vita della B. Rita de Cascia*. (Foligno, 1805.) *Messenger of the Sacred Heart*, 1902. Roman Breviary : *Pro Aliquibus Locis*, 22nd May.]

## MAY 23

## DE ROSSI, ST JOHN BAPTIST

(1698-1764)

ST JOHN BAPTIST VIANNEY once reminded Monsignor Dupanloup, when the latter was being promoted to the See of Orleans, that there are "many bishops in the Calendar of Saints, but very few Curés!" The wonder-worker of Ars was too sensible and charitable to add—"and still fewer Canons!" The reason, of course, is that nearly all the conspicuously holy Canons reached the episcopate before they went to their eternal reward, but apart from this there seems to be a tendency to regard Canons collectively, as sensible rather than saintly. For the senate of the diocese, after all, has to deal chiefly with matters that call for worldly prudence and not pious enthusiasm. In fact, cynically-minded persons might say that no small part of the united duties of a Chapter is to save the temporalities of the See from the imprudences of the devout! Still there are Saints in every rank of the Church, just as there are exceptions to every rule.

St John Baptist de Rossi, the somewhat rare instance of the canonized Canon, was born at Voltaggio, diocese of Genoa, 22nd February, 1698. His father, Charles de Rossi, and mother, Frances, *née* Anfossi, were people of the gentry class though not well off. As a child, little John Baptist was distinguished by his affectionate nature and good looks, which seem to have made him a great favourite, while he showed his innate devotion by serving more than one Mass each morning at the Parish Church. It was while serving one of these Masses that the little boy attracted the attention of a lady and gentleman in the congregation, named Scorza, with the result that they asked to be allowed to educate him as their own son. As John Baptist's father had three other children, and as the means of the family, as before stated, were not large, he consented, and John Baptist went to live with Signor and Signora Scorza at Genoa. He remained with these kind and well-to-do benefactors for three years, pursuing his studies under a private tutor, and keeping up his former practices of devotion. In 1711, his paternal uncle, Dom Lawrence de

Rossi, a Canon of the Church of St Mary in Cosmedin, persuaded the mother of the boy—his worthy father being now dead—to allow her son to live with him in Rome for the purpose of pursuing his studies at the Roman College. Consent being given, John Baptist left his good friends at Genoa and proceeded to Rome, where he was very kindly received by his uncle, and entered as a student at the *Gesù*, as the Roman College is called. That famous seat of learning grew out of a school founded in 1550 by thirteen young Jesuits, near the Church of St Venantius, where Hebrew, Greek and Latin were taught gratuitously. The College, built by Gregory XIII in 1582, from designs by Bartolomeo Ammanati, took the place of this somewhat humble commencement, and until its seizure by the Government of "United Italy" in 1870, sent forth scores of scholars yearly to all parts of the world.<sup>1</sup> John Baptist did very well at the College. He had a natural liking for books, and also a capacity for serious study—which is not quite the same thing—and he rose to the position of "Dictator," or as we should say, of "Captain," of the school. Besides devotion to Our Lady, he was also much influenced by the virtues and example of St Aloysius Gonzaga, whose *Life* he read and re-read. Unfortunately, later on, when he had begun his theological studies, he fell in with a book—no doubt one of the many pessimistic Jansenist works of so-called devotion, so common during the eighteenth century—which caused him, or rather confirmed him in, a strong tendency to scruples. The "fatal book" which stressed the need of exaggerated penances, produced in John Baptist agonies of soul, and it was long before he was able to throw off the baleful effects of this pernicious work.

In after years the Saint was never tired of warning his penitents and even young priests against the terrible danger of excessive and especially self-inflicted mortifications. "Your duty," he would say, "is to have recourse to your confessors, to be entirely open with them, and to do nothing without their advice. Do not imitate my example; through having held my tongue when I ought to have spoken, and having practised indiscreet austerities, I injured my health to that degree, that I could not continue my studies!"

John Baptist found some relief from his troubles of mind as a student, by becoming a member of "The Ristretti," a society among the students of the College, having for object the sanctification of its members, and the exercise of works of charity, chiefly the relief of the poor, and the visiting of the sick. John Baptist was assiduous in his attendance at the hospitals every Thursday and feast day. He cheered the patients by his amusing conversation, and consoled them by his pious exhortations. His

<sup>1</sup> The Roman College, as far as the philosophical and theological faculties are concerned, still exists, but in another building.

friend and chief coadjutor in this admirable work, was a fellow-student, Claude Francis du Tronchet, a member of a good old French family which is distinguished by the fact that probably another and a much later member was one of the heroic advocates who in the dark hour of Jacobin triumph stood forward as the defender of Louis XVI.<sup>1</sup> Du Tronchet afterwards entered the Franciscans, and was ordained priest, 26th May, 1725. He died on 22nd March of the following year, in the odour of sanctity, and his case is, we believe, being considered at Rome.<sup>3</sup>

During the latter part of his student days at the Collegio Romano, John Baptist was afflicted with epilepsy, which caused him much suffering and chronic ill-health. He was unable to follow the regular lectures at the College, and so attended the course of explanation of the *Summa* of St Thomas then being given by the Dominican, Fr. Bordoni. He was ordained priest, 8th March, 1721, after having obtained a dispensation on account of age, and said his first Holy Mass at the altar of his beloved Saint, Aloysius Gonzaga. After his ordination, the Abate De Rossi might easily have obtained one of the minor benefices then to be found so abundantly in Rome and the pontifical states, but he preferred a life of apostolic activity to one of dignified seclusion. He interested himself in the peasants of the Campagna, at that time a very neglected class, owing very largely to the remoteness of their habitations and the absence of spiritual facilities, though this latter evil had to a certain extent, been remedied by a number of "chapels of ease" erected in outlying districts by several of the more recent popes. De Rossi mingled with this rough race of shepherds, labourers and small farmers, won their hearts by his cheerfulness and sympathy, and reclaimed large numbers from vice and ignorance of religious truth. His charity was shown with equal alacrity to the prisoners, and he not only greatly benefited this class by his ministrations, but he was the means of getting several reforms introduced into the jails which, with the other ameliorations effected either at this time or later under Pius VI, made the prisons of the Papal States—in the opinion of John Howard, the philanthropist—among the best, if not the best, in Europe.

The labours of De Rossi among the "little poor of Jesus Christ," as he affectionately termed his underworld, left him no time for more (outwardly) attractive penitents. When a prince, on one occasion, asked him

<sup>1</sup> In conjunction with the venerable De Malesherbes and the gifted Deséze. Unlike his first courageous colleague, Francois Tronchet escaped the fiends of the Revolution, became the friend of Napoleon, and was appointed by him President of the Court of Cassation. He had much to do with the drawing up of the famous "Code Napoleon." Died 1806, aged eighty.

<sup>3</sup> In 1864, the body of Fr. Claude Francis du Tronchet was transferred to Rome at the express command of Pius IX, and reinterred in the Monastery of St Bonaventure on the Palatine where the deceased had spent part of his short life.



to be his confessor, the Saint replied: "People of your rank can find thousands of directors, but the poor and despised have the greatest difficulty in securing the services of even one!"

In connection with the hospice of St Galla in Rome for the relief of the sick and homeless poor, was a society of priests for giving catechetical instructions to persons of the indigent class. This society, known as the "Pious Union of Priests of St Galla," had no more zealous member than De Rossi: "He was, indeed, a chosen soul," wrote the Abate Joseph Fuscaglia, "and he poured out the treasures of his charity on the poor inmates of St Galla without stint or measure." Like the St Curé d'Ars, he was continually giving away his own possessions to relieve those who came to him in distress, so that he never had any clothes but those he actually wore. In addition to this engrossing work, De Rossi undertook to establish another of his own. This was the Hospice of St Louis for homeless women and girls, who, owing to their wretched situation, were in constant danger of falling into vice. He rented a large building from Prince Odescalchi, and fitted it up as a night refuge. The house was opened, 8th December, 1731, and after initial difficulties were overcome, soon had to be enlarged. He was also instrumental in causing a penitentiary for fallen women to be founded at the Ripa Grande, where reclamation was sought and often achieved by the triple means of religious instruction, orderly life and useful work. In 1737, De Rossi lost his excellent uncle, Dom Lawrence de Rossi, and to his own great confusion found himself appointed to that worthy ecclesiastic's dignity, that of a Canonry of St Mary in Cosmedin. Canon John Baptist de Rossi, as he now was, submitted to the command of his confessor and accepted his new position, though merely as a means of doing more good. Very soon his confessional at St Mary's was besieged by crowds, so that he had to obtain a dispensation from his choir duties—a favour which was readily granted by Clement XII. This dispensation was described as a "fatal relaxation of the rule," by an ill-tempered and malevolent member of the Chapter, named Tosi, who for years did all he could to annoy and harass our Saint, who, notwithstanding the indignation of the other Canons against the offender, would never suffer any steps to be taken by way of retaliation. When his persecutor was seized with his last illness, De Rossi visited the dying dignitary, treated him with great affection, and so brought him not only sincerely to repent of his unworthy behaviour, but also to end in sentiments of fervent piety. After about nine years at St Maria in Cosmedin, De Rossi, at the earnest entreaty of Cardinal Anton Maria Erba, became the Chaplain of the "Trinita dei Pellegrini," a hospice for the entertainment of poor pilgrims to Rome, especially during the great feasts and jubilees. There was always a large number of "guests" there, and De Rossi lavished

on them, in the way of instructions, hearing confessions, and frequent spiritual administrations, generally, the same care he had shown to the inmates of St Galla. He also, about this time, began a further apostolate among the haymakers and other field-labourers who came to Rome from distant parts during the harvest time, and with the same happy results. As a preacher, he avoided long discourses, flowery oratory and the discussion of abstruse and unprofitable subjects, thereby adhering to the wise injunction on this subject inculcated in the Catechism of the Council of Trent. The Gospel, the lives of the Saints, the Sacraments, and the eternal truths were his constant themes, and his addresses invariably "went home!" While seeking the spiritual welfare of the poor, he was no less zealous for the promotion of holiness among the clergy, especially young priests. He was intimate with the ecclesiastical world of Rome, and never ceased to deplore the number of clerics who were content merely to live on benefices or family fortunes, with no thought of "devoting themselves to the salvation of souls." A century later, Bishop Ullathorne was to make the same complaint and in the same place! "To deserve Paradise," De Rossi used to say, "we must work without intermission." To overcome this "do nothing" habit among so many of the clergy, the Saint, in season and out of it, urged the necessity of frequent retreats as the best means of curing this entirely unbecoming, nay fatal, lethargy. Whenever he preached to the clergy, as at Spello, he filled his auditors with enthusiasm, and imparted a new spirit which was happily shown in increased activity, and a more fervent sacerdotal life. While preaching to, and labouring for, others, De Rossi himself was a model of every priestly virtue. All the mortifications most usually to be met with in the lives of the Saints were his constant practice, and despite his persistent ill-health were never seriously relaxed. These austerities were the secret of his success, joined to almost perpetual prayer, and a happy manner which at once won the confidence of all who approached him. Several times after 1750, he caught the Roman malaria while on his rounds of charity and zeal, and in the course of 1758, it was thought that his end was at hand. He recovered, but the hour of death was only postponed for a few years. He was sent to Ariccia, near Albano, for his health, but his painful and wasting malady increasing, he returned to Rome to the Trinita dei Pellegrini, in October, 1764. There he lingered for several months, occasionally exhorting or hearing the confessions of those who came to him. "As long as I have a breath in my body, I will go wherever I am wanted," he used to say. Finally, after weeks of acute sufferings, the end came suddenly and very calmly. This second St Philip Neri had received the last rites of the Church, and was apparently following the prayers of the dying, on the morning of 23rd May, 1764, when death deprived the Alma Urbs of its

latest and most apostolic labourer. His obsequies in the Chapel of the "Trinita dei Pellegrini," where his body rests, were the signal for one of those demonstrations of veneration and regard which—after making due allowance for southern emotion—is the true sign of a genuine tribute to a saintly and noble life. The "Apostle of Rome" of the eighteenth century was Beatified by Pius IX, 7th March, 1859, and Canonized by Leo XIII, 8th December, 1881. This great and withal winning Saint is one of the patrons of the secular clergy, and chiefly with regard to that *active life* which it behoves all to lead who are called, not only to the altar, but to seek, and possibly to save, those who have strayed far from their Father's house, and are in danger of perishing eternally.

[*Life of St John Baptist de Rossi*. Translated from the Italian by Lady Herbert. Introduction, etc., by the Bishop of Salford. (London: Thomas Richardson & Son, 1883).]

MAY 23

BOBOLA, S.J., BLESSED ANDREW, MARTYR

(1590?–1657)

STUDENTS of European history do not, as a rule, read that of Poland with much patience. The troubles of a country where political divisions of a particularly acute kind have been propagated, and where a hardy peasantry has been kept in bondage from age to age by state and social contrivances scientifically calculated to promote and foster these ends, usually evoke from the majority of readers the ejaculation that every nation gets the government it deserves! We think of the insane *Liberum Veto* and the foolish senate that tolerated it; of the eighty-two thousand petty tyrants lording it over the land—to recall no further abuses—and at once forget, or feel cross over, Campbell's moving lines anent "the downfall of Poland." Yet unhappy Sarmatia would have been even worse off if to these grave domestic abuses there had been added far-reaching religious divisions of the traditional and embittered kind! Divided as she has been civilly, Poland is and always was, "deeply and intensely Catholic," and as early as 1520 the Diet of Thorn, despite the constant menace of the *Liberum Veto*, unanimously declared against the heresies of Luther. Of course, as the progress of private judgment increased religious confusion over Europe, it was inevitable that the Kingdom of Poland should be gravely infected by it. The ill-instructed and domineering nobles—with a view, no doubt, to the possible plunder of the Church—in many cases adopted for this prospective end, the various tenets of Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, etc., as each of these happened to be in the ascendant. The Primate of

Poland, James Uchanski, Archbishop of Gnesen, even conformed to Protestantism, and by 1573, the native reformed party could compel terms of almost civil equality with the Catholic majority. ("The Peace of Dissidents.") Though much was done by such zealous prelates as Cardinal Stanislaus Hosius, the translator of the *Catechism of the Council of Trent* into Polish, and Stanislaus Karnowski, the Archbishop-Primate, to save for their countrymen, the "faith once delivered to the Saints," there can be little doubt that the Jesuit Colleges and Churches, opened throughout the country, mainly owing to the Napoleonic activity of St Peter Canisius, had the lion's share in preserving the Catholicism of the nation. So renowned were these seats of learning throughout Europe, that even numbers of the non-catholic aristocracy sent their sons to be educated by the Society. Among the scions of the ruling classes in Poland, instructed in virtue and learning by the sons of St Ignatius, was Andrew Bobola, born at the ancestral Castle of Sandomir, either in 1590 or 1592.<sup>1</sup> The family of which his father, Christopher Bobola, was the head, originally came from Bohemia. Andrew's parents were both fervent Catholics, and it was no doubt their constant excellent example, and the need there was for labourers in this quarter of the Lord's Vineyard, that decided their son to enter religion. On 31st July, 1611, the feast of St Ignatius, he was admitted a novice of the Society of Jesus at Vilna, in the house that had recently been built by a near relative of his own, to replace one destroyed by fire. There were at this time some forty novices in the house, all leading lives of various degrees of perfection under Fr. Lawrence Barlilio, noted for his holiness, and spiritual insight. In 1613, Andrew took his first vows. He spent about six years in studying, acquiring during that time a deep knowledge of the Greek Fathers and the Greek language—erudition to be of great value to him in his subsequent controversies with the schismatics. He taught grammar at Braunsberg and Pultowa, and read a one year's course of divinity to a class of young theologians. He was promoted to the priesthood on 22nd March, 1622, the year made memorable in ecclesiastical annals by the canonization of St Francis Xavier. In addition to his well-known scholastic and theological attainments, Fr. Bobola was even more distinguished for his solid piety and deep love of souls. As "select preacher" at the Church of St Stanislaus, Vilna, he drew great crowds, and although his sermons were well prepared and admirably delivered, he aimed rather at fortifying the congregation against the prevailing errors of the day than producing striking but merely temporary effects. When the plague visited the city in 1625—and what city did the oft-recurring plagues of those

<sup>1</sup> The admirable Memoir of the Martyr by Père Olivaint, S.J. (Paris, 1854), gives the latter date.

days not visit ?—Fr. Bobola and his brethren were untiring in their ministrations among the sick, night and day. Eight fathers of the Society died, martyrs of charity, during the epidemic, but Fr. Andrew was reserved to glorify God in another and even more heroic way.

After being removed from Vilna, Fr. Bobola was appointed Superior of the Jesuit house at Bobruisk. Not the least part of the edification which he gave here, as elsewhere, was through his constant practice of seeking the lowest place, and reserving for himself all the difficult duties as these arose each day.

Towards the end of Fr. Bobola's stay at Bobruisk, occurred what might well be described as a sort of Cossack jacquerie, but which was destined to have momentous results in Poland. The wild nomadic tribes of the Ukraine, smarting, it seems, under a sense of injustice, rose up against their lords, and having glutted their vengeance, continued, from a sense of newly-acquired power, their warlike enterprises in various directions, and before long, what had been a more or less local rising became a sort of crusade. From a violent redress of domestic wrongs, the Cossacks now turned their attention to an invasion of Poland for the purpose of overthrowing Catholicism and setting up the Greek Schismatic Church. As usual, the heterogeneous following which made up this strange and confused army of invasion, was profoundly ignorant, and did not realize the comparatively slight differences that, generally speaking, divide Rome and Constantinople, outside the great fundamental one, and the Greek priests in many cases magnified the points of divergence for the purpose of adding fuel to the flame. To heighten the effect of the "Crusade," the Patriarch of Constantinople sent the Hetman Bogdan, the leader of the Cossacks, a Consecrated Sabre and his solemn benediction. The Pope, Innocent X, on the Catholic side, despatched to the King of Poland, John Casimir, a Consecrated Sword and Helmet. The great battle of Beresteko was fought on 30th June, 1653, in which the vast hosts of the Cossacks sustained a severe defeat, but the trouble did not end here. The Russians allied themselves with the Cossacks, and under the Czar Alexis Michaelovitch, again prepared to crush Poland which was at this time further threatened by a Swedish army under Charles Gustavus. In this great national crisis, the Society of Jesus, and the clergy generally, rose to the occasion. The schismatic crusade was met by a Catholic call to arms, and from every village the youth streamed forth to defend religion and fatherland. It was during these wars and rumours of wars, that Fr. Bobola was sent to Pinsk, a town situated in the Province of Lithuania, where the schismatics were strong, and where the greatest trouble, in view of the hostile preparations against the Country, was to be expected. The town of Pinsk belonged to Prince Adalbert Stanislaus Radziwill, head of the

illustrious Polish family of that name, and Chancellor of Lithuania. That nobleman, a zealous Catholic and patriot, had recently founded a Jesuit College in the town for the purpose of strengthening the Faith among the people, and Fr. Bobola was now placed over it as the priest most likely to ensure its success. At once he set to work. Courses of sermons and long hours in the Confessional became the order of the day. Catechism classes for the young and uninstructed were organized, and not content with these labours, the good Superior made expeditions into the neighbouring towns and villages, and in these distant places confirmed large numbers in the Faith. The town of Janow, with its overlord, Kopek, was won back to the Church.<sup>1</sup> These missionary labours greatly exasperated the local Greek clergy and their supporters, and the more so, as Fr. Bobola took good care in all his discourses and public conferences on religion to show the complete accord of the ancient Greek Fathers and learned eastern divines, generally, with the doctors and theologians of the West. In fact, it may be said here, that it is the persistent misrepresentations of the official teachers of the Greek Orthodox Church that have had so much to do in keeping up the unhappy schism since the short-lived reunion at Florence, 1439-44. To rid themselves of the "Latin Priests," the Greek schismatics in the course of 1657, called in the hordes of Cossacks then in the neighbourhood of Pinsk. These barbarian horsemen began their fanatical work by torturing and then beheading Fr. Muffon (15th May). The other Fathers had barely time to escape when the assassins burst into the town. That Fr. Bobola was the chief object of their search soon became apparent by their shouts and questions, but the head of the Jesuit Mission had gone to Janow, not to conceal himself, but to continue his usual apostolic ministrations. Though warned of his danger, he took no steps to conceal himself, and it was while driving in a carriage near the village of Poredelno that Fr. Bobola was overtaken by the Cossacks and made prisoner (16th May). His savage captors at once overwhelmed him with cruelties. He was wounded with sabres and lances, scourged, and dragged over the rough ground all the way to Janow, where the persecutors exultingly displayed to the terrified people the mangled and half-dead body of "the Snatcher of Souls!" Instigated to a great extent by their chief, Assavoula, the barbarians again fell on their victim, and continued to wreak upon him a whole series of fresh torments. His hands were slashed with knives in mockery of the priestly anointing. His hair and skin were cut from his head in the form of a supposed "tonsure," while the rest of his body was flayed to make a chasuble. All this time the martyr did not cease to pray for his murderers and to commend his soul to God, till finally the Cossack chief, wearied with the bloodshed

<sup>1</sup> The name Janow is spelt Janov in Père Olivaint's *Memoir of the Martyr*.

and the horrors, put an end to Fr. Bobola's sufferings with a thrust of his sword.

After the departure of the Cossack raiders, the mutilated remains of the heroic priest were recovered, and after being publicly venerated at Janow, were conveyed back to Pinsk, where they were interred in the Chapel of the Jesuit College. In 1702, nearly fifty years after these tragic happenings, they were still found incorrupt. The body of the martyr was afterwards transferred to Polotsk where it still remains.

Meanwhile a widespread *cultus* to the heroic and zealous priest had extended not merely throughout Poland, but even to Germany and France. The cause of the martyr began to be examined into in 1719, when the Bishop of Luck instituted judicial investigations concerning the life and death of Fr. Bobola. These were continued in Rome notably, 1755 (Ben. XIV), and 1835 (Greg. XVI), when finally on 4th June, 1853, Pius IX signed the decree of Beatification of this Blessed Servant of God. The Acts of the process had established the evidence of more than eight hundred miracles of all kinds, wrought, it is piously believed, through the intercession of the valiant missionary, whose glorious death recalls those of many of the martyrs of the primitive ages of Christianity.

[*Notice Historique sur le Bien heureux André Bobola de la Compagnie de Jésus. Père le R. P. Olivaint, de la Même Compagnie. (Paris: Julien, Lanier et Cie Editeurs, 1854.)*]

MAY 24<sup>1</sup>

## POSTEL, ST MARY MAGDALEN, FOUNDESS OF THE INSTITUTE OF THE CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

(1756-1846).

Two names illustrious in the Annals of Catholic education lived and died between the years 1756 and 1846. One of these was the Abbé MacPherson, who did so much to rescue and preserve the material possessions of the Scots College, Rome, after its seizure and sale by the French invaders in 1797. The other is St Marie Postel, the story of whose long life of ninety years is told in brief in the following narrative. Julie Françoise Catherine Postel was born at Barfleur, diocese of Coutances, on Sunday, 28th November, 1756. Her parents, Jean and Thérèse Postel were persons of superior rank of life, and they gave their daughter an excellent education, first at a local school and then at the Benedictine Convent at Valognes. The higher instruction of girls of the better class in France, as elsewhere, was then not so diffuse as now, but it had the saving merit

<sup>1</sup> The day of her Canonization, 1925.

of being more solid. It comprised a very correct knowledge of the mother tongue, history and geography, Latin—this subject usually taught from the Vulgate—a modern language, generally Italian, “Court” handwriting, now so much admired, and the then inevitable “use of the globes.” Music was acquired as an additional accomplishment, as fencing was by boys, the almost universal practice of duelling at that time making this last-named art a practically necessary part of every gentleman’s education. At the age of eighteen, Julie returned home “finished” in the sense that word used to be employed by the simple-minded genteel who imagined that learning ended with school! While at the convent, Julie had solemnly promised—some accounts say “vowed”—to consecrate her life to God and her neighbour. She began to fulfil this engagement by opening a school both for the poor and for those who were better off. She proved a born instructress, and before long even her youngest pupils, little children of five and six, could read tolerably well. The young people were well-grounded in the Catechism, and in their domestic duties, and many years later, the old girls of Mdlle Postel’s school were generally distinguished by the care they displayed both of their children and of their homes.

The good work at Barfleur, as elsewhere throughout France of course, ceased with the advent of the Revolution. It is not a little remarkable that the very year that British Catholics were liberated from the bulk of the penal laws (1791), their brethren in France began to enter upon the martyrdom which was to reach its blood-stained zenith under the “Terror.” During all this terrible time, Julie was the “Valiant Woman” of the hour, the “Margaret Clitherow”—though happily without the death—of the suffering congregation of Barfleur. She courageously refused to attend the schismatical services of the “Constitutional” priest whom the Jacobin authorities had thrust on the parish, but opened a secret chapel in her house where the Abbé Lamarche, the expelled Curé of Notre Dame de Barfleur, said Mass and ministered to the faithful. The chapel was an obscure room under the stairs—the methods of the former penal times in England were, of course, being copied—and there was the usual machinery of passwords, secret signs, midnight meetings, hiding-places, etc., as in the days of the Blessed Cuthbert Maine and Edmund Campion over here.

On more than one occasion was this true heroine in imminent danger of death. In fact, one midnight, as the priest was saying Mass, a crowd of revolutionary soldiers and “*citoyens*” surrounded the house. The celebrant had scarcely time to hide himself and the tabernacle, when the intruders poured in. “Come, Citizeness,” said the leader, “where is the priest who was here a minute ago?” “Look for him,” was the fearless reply, which the invaders promptly proceeded to do, but fortunately to no purpose. This hour of extreme peril as it proved became a blessing



in disguise, for as the party was leaving, one of the soldiers, kinder than the rest, said: "Let her alone, she harms no one, but on the contrary, does good to the children." Henceforward, however, it was deemed advisable not to reserve the Blessed Sacrament in the Tabernacle. So Julie, to her intense joy, was commissioned to carry the sacred hosts about with her, and even after the manner of the Christians in the days of the early persecutions, to administer Holy Communion to others. It may have been during the course of one of these journeys to the sick, that the "Vierge-Prêtre"—as Julie came to be called from her heroic services to the altar and the priesthood—performed one of her most remarkable acts of courage. Seeing a duel in progress, she rushed in between the clashing swords, like St Telemachus among the Roman gladiators, and with a "through my heart first!" kind of look, caused the antagonists to desist. It was in this spirit that the Christian heroes and heroines of France faced the evils of the time, and so left a precious legacy of encouragement to those whose lot has been cast in less difficult days.

When the large contingents of "intelligent foreigners" began to tour France again as soon as the orgies and horrors of the "Age of Reason" and the "Terror" had made way for sanity and safety, nothing more unfavourably impressed the observant than the shocking state of the rising generation of the poorer class. The Revolution had swept away the whole network of excellent schools of all grades which before 1789 made France one of the best educated nations in the world, and in every town, and throughout every countryside, might be seen the youthful victims of the cataclysm roaming about in squalor, ignorance, and, of course, vice.<sup>1</sup> To "save the children of the Poor," was the greatest labour of the Church of the Concordat after the restoration of ordered public worship and all that this implied.

Julie Postel was one of the band of heroic women such as Madame de Franssu, Foundress of the Nuns of the Nativity, Madame Blin de Bourdon and St Madeleine Barat, who nobly came forward to help to meet the pressing want. She had been admitted a Franciscan tertiary on Christmas day, 1798, and henceforth her life was to be one long struggle against almost every difficulty that can assail a founder of any good work! In May, 1805, she went to Cherbourg and laid her proposal for a school for girls before the Abbé Louis Charles Cabart, chaplain to the hospice there. She frankly told him that she had no resources other than Providence and her own labour, but the good priest, greatly struck by her earnestness, and knowing already of her zeal and determination, consented, and a house in the Rue de Fourdray was rented, and a school opened.

<sup>1</sup> H. R. York: *France in 1802*. (Heinemann, 1906.) Arthur Young: *Travels in France*, 1787, 1788, 1789 (London: G. Bell & Sons, 1900.)

It soon had three hundred children, and three old pupils of the Foundress came as assistants. On the 8th of September, 1807, the four made their religious vows before the representative of the Bishop, Mgr. Rousseau, Julie taking the name of Mary Magdalen. This was the official commencement of the Sisters of the Christian Schools, but great trials were at hand. Four years later, the Daughters of Providence, the Congregation of which had been founded in 1643, by Madame de Polaillon returned to Cherbourg, where they had a house before the Revolution. The Providence Nuns conducted schools for orphan and destitute girls, and rather than that there should be any rivalry, Mother Mary Magdalen nobly resolved to leave the field of work to those who had so long and well carried it on. So the newly erected Community migrated to Octeville-l'Avenel to leave it in six months to go to Tamerville. All during this anxious time, death had been busy with the Community, so that what with these losses and the deprivation of the house of Cherbourg, Mother M. Magdalen found herself alone with but twelve orphans. A trial was made at Tamerville and Valognes, but no success crowned the work, and even the faithful Abbé Cabart lost heart and talked of the Institute being dissolved. It was one of these crosses that brought out the heroic—the St Jeanne d'Arc—spirit in the holy Foundress. "I am so certain that our Lord desires the realization of my projects," she said, "that I shall none the less promote their execution with the greatest ardour." This noble sentiment seems to have marked the turning point in the affairs of the Sisters of the Christian Schools. A little later they were invited back to Tamerville, where for a time the little band maintained itself by making clothing and umbrellas which were sold in the district. The school grew in the teeth of the still besetting difficulties, and was "recognized" by the Minister of Public Instruction in 1818—after Mother M. Magdalen had passed her examination and obtained her teacher's diploma at the age of sixty-two! In 1817, some of the Sisters returned to Cherbourg to open a school that was badly needed in one of the new suburbs of that rapidly growing naval port. Another similar foundation was made at Treville, at the request of the inhabitants. A more interesting development—from the historical point of view—took place in 1832, when Mother M. Magdalen purchased the old Benedictine Abbey at Quesnoy in the Commune of Saint Saviour le Vicomte. The place had been ruined by some of the ghoulies of the Revolution, but once in the hands of the good religious it was gradually restored, and soon acquired a great and deserved reputation. It was here, in 1836, that the Community received the Rule by which it has since been governed—that of St John Baptist de la Salle—with certain modifications to meet the special requirements of the Institute. A decree of Louis Philippe, dated

13th October, 1838, gave legal status to the Sisters of the Christian Schools in France. A splendid church was added to the convent by restoring the old one between 1833 and 1841. The grave injury to two of the towers during the severe storm on 25th November, 1842, was another "cross," to be received by the Foundress, as was her wont, as "a further sign of God's favour!"

Mother M. Magdalen was now nearing her ninetieth year. She was a living "link," so to speak, between the reign of Louis XV, and that of the "Citizen King" and his contemporary, Queen Victoria—between the ceremonious eighteenth century, with its powdered wigs, sedan-chairs and courtly manners, and the iron age of railway trains, the electric telegraph—and nerves! In June, 1846, she began to fail visibly, and on the following fourteenth of July, became seriously ill, and received the last rites. Almost to the end she recited the Hours of the Little Office, and before death, pointed out a passage in the writings of St Bernard, as a sort of last monition to her sorrowing Sisters. It ran: "The religious who does not work, is not worthy to be a religious!" She died calmly in the Lord two days later, and her remains, since 1855, repose in a stately tomb in the Abbey Church, by then fully restored under the able direction of M. Halley. Numerous miracles, many of them cures of bodily diseases, attested still further her sanctity, and on 17th May, 1908, Pius X, decreed her Beatification. On 24th May, 1925, the present Holy Father added her venerated name to the Saints, to the joy, not only of her spiritual daughters in various countries of Europe, but of the whole Catholic world, which she has animated by the example of her surpassing holiness and unflinching heroism.

[*St Mary Magdalen Postel*, by the Rev. Father Cuthbert, O.F.M. (Catholic Truth Society.) Henry Redhead York: *France in 1802*. (London: William Heinemann, 1906.) Abbé L. Cristiani: *Madame de Franssu, Fondatrice de la Congregation de la Nativité*. (Avignon: Aubanel Frères, 1926).]

MAY 25

## BARAT, ST MADELEINE SOPHIE LOUISE, FOUNDESS OF THE SOCIETY OF THE SACRED HEART

(1779-1865)

AMONG the many vast problems which confronted the Hierarchy of France after the promulgation of the Concordat (1801-2), was the subject of the higher education of the laity. The twelve years or so that had elapsed

since the downfall of the old regime with its splendid colleges, convents, and schools everywhere, had ushered in a great deal of practical paganism with its train of moral evils, and such prelates as Cardinal du Belloy, Archbishop of Paris, Cambacères of Rouen and Du Boisgelin of Tours, recognized that unless the deficiency was speedily rectified, the next generation of men and women of the more influential classes of society would be characterized by an ignorance of religion even worse than that which was the heritage of the cataclysm. But happily the remedy was at hand. The age was that of new religious organizations and orders, and the modern Catholic education, not only of France but of Europe, may be said to date from the commencement of the nineteenth century. Among the great pioneers of the movement was Madeleine Sophie Barat, born at Joigny (Yonne), 13th December, 1779. Her father, a wine grower and cooper, appears to have amassed a considerable fortune, for he was able to give a superior education to his several children, one of whom, Louis, became a professor at the college of the town. He was imprisoned in Paris during the "Terror" and narrowly escaped death. After his release, he resumed his studies for the priesthood and was ordained in 1799. But, meantime, he and his sister went to live with an old maiden lady in the Rue Touraine, where the Abbé Barat devoted himself to the education of his very near and dear relative. Under his tuition, Madeleine Barat became proficient in Latin and Greek—these latter learnt chiefly from the Vulgate and Septuagint—in ancient and modern history, Spanish and Italian, besides, of course, a thorough grounding in Christian doctrine and French literature. Still more, did she learn from this excellent brother the spirit of penance and the love of souls which so greatly distinguished her through life. The Abbé Barat became a member of a society of priests known as "Les Pères de la Foi." Their intention was to join the Society of Jesus as soon as that should be restored, and meantime they gave missions and retreats and conducted schools, not only in France but abroad.<sup>1</sup> Père Joseph Varin, the leading light of the Fathers of the Faith, was desirous of instituting a society of women, devoted to the higher education of girls, and also to promoting the *cultus* of the Sacred Heart. He saw in Madeleine Barat a woman made, as it were, for these objects, and on 21st November, 1800, she and three other ladies solemnly consecrated themselves to the new and much wanted work. Next year, Père Varin acquired at Amiens an old boarding-school which had become dilapidated. He refurbished it, and installed there Madame Barat and

<sup>1</sup> The Pères de la Foi had a school for the sons of the *émigré* nobility and gentry in an old house opposite Kensington Palace, at the beginning of the last century. Richard Lalor Sheil, the famous orator and barrister, was a pupil there before going to Stonyhurst in 1804, and he has left some very interesting descriptions of this little French world in his racy *Sketches of the Irish Bar*, vol. i.

two of her companions. In October of the same year, a free school for the poor was opened in conjunction with the High School, and it soon had some 160 pupils. Madame Barat, though much against her inclination, had to accept the post of Superior. The rising Foundation was much assisted at this time by the able chaplain, Père Loriquet, who drew up a very efficient scheme of studies and other scholastic details. Up to this time the Sisters were known as "Les Dames de la Foi," but as Père Varin was more or less suspected by the imperial Government of royalist tendencies—he had formerly been an officer in the Emigrant Army of the Prince of Condé—it was considered advisable to change the title of the Sisters to that of "Dames de l'Instruction Chrétienne." When the foundation at Amiens was considered sufficiently able to stand alone, Madame Barat went, at the request of Père Varin, to Grenoble, where a Madame Philippine-Rose Duchesne had in vain attempted to reopen the Visitation Convent in its former house.<sup>1</sup> This community was now united to the Dames de l'Instruction Chrétienne, and later it was the lot of Madame Duchesne to introduce the Dames du Sacre Cœur into America. After her return to Amiens, Madame Barat received the title of Superior-General (1806), though this high position was only obtained by one vote, owing, it is said, to an ambitious priest who wished his nominee to be elected. The intrigues of this ecclesiastic were a severe trial not only to Madame Barat but to the whole community, but happily for the success of the work they were not successful. In 1807, a month after his hard-won triumph of Eylau, Napoleon by decree legally authorized the "Dames de l'Instruction Chrétienne," and from this time all anxiety on the subject of their civil status was removed. Not long after the Society of Jesus was restored, in 1814, by Pius VII, Père Varin and his colleagues, who had now become Jesuits, obtained from the Holy See rules for the Dames based on those of St Ignatius. From this time the Institute was known as "Les Dames du Sacre Cœur, and this period, 1815-30, was one of great expansion for the foundation, both in France and abroad. Houses were opened at Rome (at the Trinita dei Monte), Paris (Hotel de Biron), and in America (at St Charles, New Orleans, 1818). An ordinance of Charles X, in April 1827, approved of the work of the nuns, which had already the year before received the special blessing of the Sovereign Pontiff, Leo XII.

Six years prior to this last event, Madame Barat had convoked a general assembly of all the Superiors at Paris (1820), where various regulations were drawn up for the purpose of still further improving the educational curri-

<sup>1</sup> This heroic nun (1769-1852) belonged on her mother's side to the distinguished Casimir Perier family. Besides founding several convents in the United States, she did much to promote the conversion of the Red Indians.

culum of the convents, and of inculcating among the pupils a warm devotion to the Sacred Heart. Indeed, by this time, the Sœurs du Sacre Cœur were famed all over France, and their convents, especially that of Paris, taught the daughters of many of the first families in the Kingdom. Side by side with these, more or less aristocratic high schools, the nuns have always maintained in each centre a school for poor children, and this custom is not the least of the many happy features of this great educational Institute.

As the " Liberal " Party affected to regard the King, Charles X, and the Royalists generally as the " tools of the Jesuits ! " it is not surprising to learn that during the July Revolution (1830), Madame Barat wisely decided to close the house in Paris for a time, and remove the Novitiate to Switzerland. But this indefatigable woman never ceased her labours. During this period she founded no less than fourteen orphanages for the children of the victims of the terrible cholera visitation of 1832, and also commenced at Turin the system of retreats for women of the world which has since become established almost everywhere. By 1837, the Society possessed no fewer than 41 houses, 27 in France, and 14 abroad, and two years later a general Council of the Superiors of the various convents was held in Rome. It was there decided to divide the Society into provinces and to have both the Mother-House and the Novitiate in the Eternal City for three years, but the opposition of the French bishops, notably that of Mgr. de Quelen and Mgr. Affre (Paris), and most of the nuns, proved too strong, and in 1843 the Mother-House was restored to Paris, first in the old Convent of the Feuillantines (Faubourg St Jacques) and then in the Rue de Varennes.

Those fateful years were followed by very remarkable developments. High Schools of the Sacre Cœur were established in 1850 in Holland, Italy, Spain, North America, England and Ireland.<sup>1</sup> That year the holy Foundress lost her agelong friend and counsellor, Père Varin, but she was long ere this the moving power that, under God, directed the whole foundation of the Sacre Cœur. To great firmness of will she joined the deepest sympathy and kindness, and that happy faculty of letting people do their work in their own way. Like Napoleon and all great leaders, she knew by a sort of intuition the right persons for whatever task had to be

<sup>1</sup> The Sacred Heart Nuns opened a convent at Berrymead, near Acton, in 1841. In 1850, they acquired " Elm Grove," Roehampton, a property formerly belonging to Lord Ellenborough. The first Superior was Mother Charlotte Goold. The present beautiful Chapel was opened, 1872, and the same year Rev. Mother Digby became Superior. Under her and Mother Henrietta Kerr, the school greatly developed, and the Children of Mary became very flourishing under Lady Georgiana Fullerton and Lady Lothian. The late Mother Janet Stuart, the well-known authoress of *The Education of Catholic Girls*, was Superior-Vicar from 1894 till 1911. The number of boarders exceeds 130.

undertaken. She was consulted by all the great world from Popes and Princes to experts on education, such as, the Comte de Falloux and the famous Madame de Genlis (1746-1830), whose "Letters on Education" were oracles on the subject in France till well into the last century. Besides a great spirit of prayer, she practised always that rare form of mortification which consists of doing the most irksome duties as if they were great pleasures! During the course of her long life she made hundreds of journeys, wrote tens of thousands of letters on matters of business or utility, in addition to constant interviews, for the same purpose. She died at the Mother-House, Paris, on the Feast of the Ascension—the day she had foretold—25th May 1865, and was buried at the Novitiate House at Conflans. Her greatest monument—even above the eighty flourishing convents she left behind her—was that spirit of true Christian virtue and solid knowledge which has permeated so many of the women, not merely of France, but of the world, a spirit which caused Pius XI to declare, when enrolling her name among the Saints of the Church, 24th May, 1925, "that if there still exists among the crowd of worldlings a knot of sensible Christian souls, that blessing is largely due to the school of sound Catholic education which this great servant of God established and propagated." At the present time, the Congregation of the Sacre Cœur numbers over 6500 nuns, with about 150 establishments, while their living pupils, both past and present, must be reckoned by the million.

[*Almanach Catholique Francais pour 1926.* (Paris: Bloud et Gay.)  
*Madame Barat*, par la Comtesse d'Adhémar. (Paris: Bloud et Gay.).]

MAY 26 (?)

## THE BLESSED MARTYRS OF UGANDA

(1886)

THE somewhat slow, but happily obviously steady, progress made in the Christianizing of "Darkest Africa" by the various Missionary Congregations—chiefly French—in the last sixty years or so, prepares us for the information that these victories of the Faith have not been won without a considerable outpouring of that Martyrs' blood which is the "seed of the Church." Among the various holy persons beatified by Pope Benedict XV, in 1920, were a group of Negro Martyrs of Uganda, whose mode of death reminds one of the tortures inflicted on many of the primitive sufferers for Christianity. In the course of 1876, the illustrious Cardinal Lavigerie sent a contingent of his well-known "White Fathers" to commence the conversion of Central Africa. As had so often happened

before, notably in China and Japan in the sixteenth century, the local powers-that-be were at first friendly towards the new-comers, being no doubt glad to accept the various presents they brought with them, and to avail themselves of the superior knowledge and general attainments of the European strangers. But African and Oriental peoples are notoriously suspicious, and before many years had passed, the success of the Fathers, and their great hostility, and that of their many converts, to the debasing "Voodoo" and other pagan rites of Negrodom, soon created a distinctly unfriendly attitude towards the missionaries and their congregation. This enmity was much intensified by a false report—similar in substance to that brought against St Theodore of Tarsus, Archbishop of Canterbury, and his companions when passing through France about 667—that they were spies and emissaries of an ill-disposed power! Two converts of the Fathers, Joseph Mkasa, a Counsellor of the King, and Mathias Mouroumba, a greatly revered Judge, were put to death out of hatred of Christianity, and under circumstances of revolting cruelty, the latter martyr being slowly hacked almost to pieces, and then left to expire in agony. The next to die for the Faith were Charles Lonanga and several of the King's pages, young men ranging from about eighteen to twenty-five years of age. These were brought before the Monarch and called upon to give up Christianity, especially to renounce the practice of "praying." Upon their refusal, they were condemned to be burnt alive. They were each encased in faggots and bundles of reeds, laid upon the ground and left to be slowly consumed. During the process of the martyrdom, a number of Christian native children standing around showed extraordinary fortitude, not only encouraging the sufferers but declaring their eagerness to emulate their glorious constancy. Until death put a period to their sufferings, these heroic witnesses for the Gospel in this hitherto little-known part of the vast African Continent, continued to recite the simple prayers and ejaculations they had learnt from the Fathers who had baptized and instructed them.

These events occurred in 1886. On June 6th, 1920, the "Martyrs of Uganda," as they are generally styled, were Beatified at St Peter's by Benedict XV. Among those present on this memorable occasion were three elderly men who were among the children present at the martyrdoms nearly forty years before. These interesting survivors of an episode of such happy augury to the cause of the modern Missionary Church of Africa and Catholicism generally, were received by the Holy Father and the high officials of the Pontifical Court with marked respect, while many of the vast congregation present pressed forward to kiss the hands of those who had been the companions of, and who might have been the fellow-sufferers, with the heroic band now honoured by the Universal Church.



MAY 26

## GERONIMO, ST FRANCIS, CONFESSOR

(1642-1716)

It is not unlikely that had Francis Geronimo not elected to enter the Society of Jesus, he would have risen to very high honours in the Church, and died a Cardinal-Archbishop of one of the Sees of Italy. For he was a rare example of learning, zeal, and practical ability combined in the same person. Born at Grottaglie, Apulia, Italy, 17th December, 1642, about a fortnight after the death of Cardinal Richelieu, he was one of the eleven children of Leonardi Geronimo and Gentellesca Gravina, his wife, a pious couple of the middle class. Of their family, three of the sons, including the subject of this notice, became priests. As soon as he was able to read well, the young Francis made a practice of teaching Catechism to many of the children of the place, a virtue so often to be met with in the lives of Saints afterwards distinguished for their love of souls. He made his earlier studies with the Theatines, and while under their care begun those austerities which later became part of his rule of life, fasting much and paying long visits to the Blessed Sacrament, especially at night. Being intended for the priesthood, he received the tonsure from the Archbishop of Taranto in 1638. Most of his ecclesiastical studies were made at the Seminary of the last-named city, but towards the end of his theological course, Francis proceeded to Naples for the purpose of taking his doctorate of divinity at the University. Naples at that time was, ecclesiastically speaking, in a very flourishing condition. The clergy were learned and zealous, and the laity united and devout. He was ordained priest by the Bishop of Pozzuoli, 18th March, 1666. The erudition and general abilities of the Abbate Geronimo seemed to mark him out for a professional career, and he was offered, and accepted, the post of Prefect in the College of Nobles at Naples, an academy under the direction of the Jesuit Fathers and devoted to the education of the sons of the aristocracy. Notwithstanding the supposed exalted atmosphere of the place, the College, as was inevitable, had its difficulties. Some of the students were inclined to turbulence, and on one occasion, a pupil who had been reprimanded by the Prefect for some delinquency, so far forgot himself as to strike the latter a heavy blow. Fr. Geronimo bore this outrage with quiet forbearance, wisely waiting till time and reflection had cooled the anger of his youthful assailant, before speaking seriously to him about his abominable conduct.

On 1st July, 1670, Fr. Geronimo entered the Society of Jesus. His family, which, no doubt, like so many other good, but somewhat worldly

ambitious people, was expecting its brilliant relative to mount high in the hierarchy, was at the outset much opposed to this step, but eventually his father saw the excellence of it and personally withdrew his disapproval. Fr. Geronimo was now placed for three years in the district of Otranto, where he effected much good by his earnest preaching, labours in the Confessional, and personal influence among the people. It was his holy wish to go to India, after the example of his great patron, S. Francis Xavier, but his superiors decided that Naples was to be his "Indies," and consequently that city became the chief field of his apostolic ministry for upwards of forty years. Though Naples, as we have said, was spiritually in a very satisfactory state at that time, there was, as usual, much work to be done, especially in the poorer quarters. Fr. Geronimo preached regularly not only in the Jesuit Church, but following the injunction of the Gospel, he went constantly into the public streets and squares, and gave courses of open-air sermons to large numbers of people who could not or would not be persuaded to hear them otherwise. In addition to this method of getting at the stray sheep, he also systematically visited the docks, prisons, and quarters of the galley-slaves, and delivered simple, yet highly effective, discourses on the principal truths of the Faith to these rough and largely spiritually neglected congregations. He had "a wonderful way" not only with these unattractive folk, but also with public sinners, some 500 of whom were led to abandon their evil courses as the result of his vehement reminder to them of the transient things of time and the everlasting ones of eternity! Among these sincere penitents was the well-known, or rather notorious, beauty La Bella Venezia. Realizing the great value of regular and sustained instruction as an aid to perseverance, Fr. Geronimo began, in 1683, his famous series of retreats, beginning with one to the nobility and gentry of the city and district, and continuing the course among the convents of the same area. These exercises not only reformed or improved the individual, but they also led to the introduction of a much higher standard of devotion even in religious houses, while several abuses arising from isolated instances of relaxed discipline, etc., were removed in consequence of the better spirit brought about by our Saint. The time not spent on these exercises, was devoted by this indefatigable missionary to visiting the hospitals, notably those given up to the care of incurable or revolting diseases. With true sanctity, he never manifested the slightest repugnance even when he had to deal with persons afflicted with the most loathsome maladies, but was ever willing, cheerful and mindful only of the spiritual good to be done. Like all sensible people, he abhorred idleness or rather that insidious habit of dallying, through which so many precious hours are lost. When not otherwise occupied—and that was, indeed, a rare occurrence—he employed the time

at his disposal in making silk or paper flowers for poor churches, an art which he is said to have brought to great perfection.

The missions that Fr. Geronimo gave to the labouring classes, he repeated on more than one occasion among the military, and with the same good results that attended all his apostolic labours in this direction. These happy effects were mainly brought about by the great spirit of mortification that permeated all the actions of this wonderful zealot of souls. He rose very early, after only about three or four hours sleep, made a long meditation, and said Holy Mass with extraordinary care and devotion. He habitually wore a sharp coat of mail next the skin, took the discipline at intervals, and never, even during the coldest weather, warmed himself at a fire. After 1702, he usually spent one-half of each year at Naples and the other half, away giving retreats. It was while delivering one of these courses to the students of the College at Naples, during the Spring of 1715, that he was taken ill with pleurisy. He was sent to Colomella to recruit, at the country house of the Society, but derived little benefit from the change. He returned to Naples and there, on 11th May, 1716, the "Apostle" of the city passed to his reward. For years, Fr. Geronimo had been popularly regarded as a "living Saint." Even when going about the streets he seemed like one wrapped in ecstasy. His obsequies were the signal for such an outburst of religious enthusiasm among the excitable populace of Naples, that the troops guarding the sacred remains had great difficulty in preventing the crowds from carrying away the coffin! In 1758, shortly before his own death, Pope Benedict XIV spoke of Fr. Geronimo as one who had practised heroic virtues, and all during the eighteenth century—despite the general coldness and scepticism of the age—there was a growing devotion to the "Apostle of Naples," not merely in Italy, but in the south of Germany. On 2nd May, 1806, Pius VII decreed his Beatification, and it seems that nothing but the spiritual-temporal conflict of the Holy See with the colossal power of Napoleon prevented the Canonization of this great servant of God shortly afterwards. He was enrolled among the number of the Saints by Gregory XVI on 26th May, 1839, on the same day as witnessed the canonization of St Alphonsus Liguori, who as a child, had been embraced by St Francis Geronimo, many of whose holy methods and practices of piety seem to have descended to the great moralist and doctor of the Church. There are several excellent *Lives* of St F. Geronimo including one in English in the admirable "Quarterly Series."<sup>1</sup> But in all cases, the chief sources of our knowledge of his apostolic labours are derived from the characteristically modest *Brief Notice* ("Brevi Notizie"), which he wrote of these at the express command of his spiritual Superiors. Though his preaching,

<sup>1</sup> Published by Messrs Burns Oates & Washbourne.

which was so powerful a weapon in the warfare for souls, is often described as having been "extemporary," the Saint, as a fact, rarely went into the pulpit without careful preparation of the discourse, as is abundantly proved by the many sermon-plans in writing which he has left, as memorials of his thoroughness in this as in much else which he achieved.

MAY 28

POLE, THE BLESSED MARGARET, COUNTESS OF  
SALISBURY, MARTYR  
(1473?-1541)

THE life of Margaret Pole, Countess of Salisbury, was tragic from her cradle to her grave! Nay, even before she was born, death in its most violent or dreaded forms had been long busy with her family—hastening to extinction a line that had swayed the destinies of England for nearly four centuries and a half. Her grandfather was that splendid Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick, the mighty King-maker, who as the "last of the Barons," so fittingly died on the stricken field of Barnet, and whose soldier's passing gave to Shakespeare a theme worthy of some of his most affecting lines. Her father was the George, Duke of Clarence, brother of Edward IV, whose death in the Tower in January, 1478, has been attributed to so many causes. The murdered "Princes in the Tower," Edward V and his little brother, the Duke of York, were her first cousins, while her only brother, Edward, Earl of Warwick, was judicially murdered by Henry VII to ensure his own possession of the Crown. The list of tragedies in the family of the Blessed Margaret is still far from complete, but sufficient instances have been given to justify the description we have given of her whole career.

Margaret, Countess of Salisbury, was born at Farley Castle, near Bath, on 14th August, in or about the year 1473. Her mother, Isabel, daughter of the above-mentioned "King-maker," died 22nd December, 1476, and her father in the Tower nearly two years later. During the reign of Edward IV, little Margaret and her brother were brought up at Sheen, with the children of her uncle, King Edward IV. At his death, Margaret and Edward, after a short stay at Warwick Castle—their ancestral home—resided for a short time at the Court of Richard III. When the crook-back King's son died, the youthful Earl of Warwick became *de jure* heir to the Crown, and Margaret, his sister, in the same way, Princess Royal. These short-lived honours, however, ended in 1485, when the victory of Bosworth gave the Throne to the Tudor Adventurer who, as Henry VII

was to introduce a new dynasty and the oldest and most repulsive form of Oriental despotism into the realm! England, as the late Mr J. M. Kerr shows in his well-known *Elements of Public Law*, was as practically free in 1485 as she was in the nineteenth century. By the time of the death of Harry Tudor's appalling son, the country had become as abject and prostrate as any of the dominions of contemporary Sultans or Rajahs!

In 1491, when Margaret was about eighteen years of age, she was married by the King, Henry VII, to a distant relative and thorough-going supporter of his own, Sir Richard Pole. The Order of the Garter was conferred upon this gentleman, who hailed from Buckinghamshire, and in 1486, on the birth of Prince Arthur, the King's eldest son, he received the high position of Governor to the Prince of Wales.

Lady Pole, as she was now, appears to have been happy in her union. Five children were born of the marriage, and both she and her husband stood high in the favour of the cold and calculating King. But one dark cloud hung ever over her. All this time her unhappy brother, the true heir to the Crown, lay in the Tower, his only "crime," of course, being that summed up in the phrase, "the right of the first-born is his!" Secluded from all society, and most shamefully neglected, the poor young Earl of Warwick grew up in almost total ignorance and simplicity, so as not to know, as men said, "a goose from a capon." Once, to expose the Lambert Simnel pretensions by the most convincing of all proofs, Henry caused the unhappy youth to be paraded through London, and this show duly over, the royal captive was again consigned to his lonely prison. Then in 1499, came his alleged attempt to escape, together with another claimant, the plebeian Perkin Warbeck, and the cruel and selfish despot had a plausible pretext for bringing the "last of the Plantagenets to the scaffold." This was one of the most brutal and callous State murders in the whole of English history, and the absence of any sort of protest either from the servile hierarchy or the upstart lords that bowed down before Henry's throne, shows how deeply the nation had already sunk in political and social slavery! The decapitated corpse of the young and perfectly innocent Earl, thus foully done to death, was interred at Bisham Priory, near Maidenhead, a place where his grief-stricken sister was to find a home nearer the end of her own sorrow-laden and tragic life.

When the sickly Arthur married Catharine of Aragon, and went to keep his short-lived Court at Ludlow Castle, Lady Pole became one of the ladies of the Princess of Wales. The appointment must have carried with it poignant reflections on both sides. For Catharine herself believed—and was later bitterly to make her foreboding known—that no good could come of her union with the scion of the Tudor House, since that union had been brought about by the price of innocent blood! For the "most

Catholic"—and most calculating—King Ferdinand VII, her father, had made it one of the conditions of his daughter's nuptials, that there should be no claimants to the English Crown. His royal brother of England had forthwith nobly obliged by presenting to the Monarch of Castile and Aragon, the head of the innocent Warwick on a charger—and "all went merry as a marriage-bell"—for a time! Catharine on her side, soon conceived a great affection for the sister of one so cruelly sacrificed to make smooth her own matrimonial path. She did all she could to forward the interests of the Pole family, notably after the death of Sir Richard in 1503. There can also be little doubt that when, in November, 1513, Parliament reversed the infamous Act of Attainder passed on her murdered brother and restored to Margaret's family the title and estates, forfeited on that iniquitous occasion, the excellent Queen Catharine again proved herself a friend at Court, and facilitated by her influence the partial undoing of this hideous murder by statute.

When the Princess Mary, afterwards Queen, was baptized in the Church of the Franciscan Observants at Greenwich, the Countess of Salisbury—as Lady Margaret Pole had now become, owing to the reversal of her brother's attainder, and the restoration of the ancestral honours—held the child at the font. Nine years later, she was nominated Governess of the Princess, and appointed to preside over the Court of the little royal lady at Ludlow Castle, one of the official residences of the Princes and Princesses of Wales.

Meanwhile the children of the Lady Salisbury were growing up, and the most interesting of them was undoubtedly Reginald, the future Cardinal and last Catholic Archbishop of Canterbury. Endowed by Providence with great personal beauty and rare mental gifts, he possessed what was greater than these, that sense of principle, and that elevated moral standard which were so conspicuously lacking to the ruling and upper classes throughout the Tudor period. A boy Bachelor of Oxford at the age of fifteen, he had afterwards studied the Canon Law at Padua. The world, indeed, was at the feet of this singularly gifted youth. Henry was to think of making him Archbishop of York after the death of Wolsey, and still later was even more intensely to think of having him assassinated! Meanwhile, as a most winsome and delectable youth, he was a decided "catch" from the matrimonial point of view, and good Queen Catharine, ever eager to serve a family that had suffered so much through her, but surely not by her, had ideas of marrying the Princess Mary to the brilliant son of her almost lifelong friend. The "future" of the much-discussed Reginald, however, was settled, and settled finally by the complications and menaces of the royal divorce question which became acute about 1527-8.

A little later, the French Ambassador Castillon, horrified at the well-nigh weekly slaughter that had become almost a mere incident in the life of England at this period, exclaimed: "I think few Lords feel safe in this country!" Reginald Pole, to whom the King looked for learned and moral support at this crisis, was certainly one of the majority, so to save his head, he prudently withdrew to the Continent, under the pretext of pursuing his theological studies.

The immediate effect of the King's divorce and subsequent marriage with Anne Boleyn, was to deprive the Countess of Salisbury of her post of Governess to the Princess Mary, and, indeed, to cause her forcible separation from her charge to whom she had become tenderly attached. Robbed thus of the friends of her youth—doomed to see many of them die in prison or on the scaffold—herself declared illegitimate and deprived of her just rights—is it any wonder that Mary learnt to loathe the very name of the "Reformation?" For from the first, its aiders and abettors ever showed themselves the thick and thin supporters of despotism—the despotism that plundered the church and the poor—cynically gave the "people" a Bible which most of them could neither read nor understand—and filled the whole country with nauseating phrases and catchwords redolent of cant and hypocrisy! All this has to be borne in mind in judging of the Queen of "bloody" memory. After the breaking up of the Princess Mary's household, Lady Salisbury went to live for a time at Bisham, close to her murdered brother's "last long home."

The greater Abbeys, as is well-known, were not suppressed till 1539, but for many months before this, it was generally understood throughout England that the Religious Houses were doomed. Henry's prodigality was enormous, and his meretricious Court and the host of extravagances its pleasures—noble and ignoble—entailed, made him cast envious eyes on the age-long monastic Foundations and their material possessions. This was quite apart from their known dislike of his schismatical policy, and so the fate of Abbeys and Priories was soon sealed. The Priory of Canons Regular of St Augustine at Bisham was dear to Lady Salisbury and her family, apart from its sacred character, and the fact that the remains of their murdered relative, the ill-fated Earl of Warwick, lay buried within its precincts. For it had been founded by William de Montacute, Earl of Salisbury, in the reign of Edward III, and so might almost be regarded as a quasi possession of the house. Lady Salisbury now advised the Prior *not* to resign the Priory unless the inevitable occurred, when, of course, all would be able to see that the dissolution had been made by force. The said Prior was ejected to make way for the notorious William Barlow, who shortly afterwards "surrendered" the House to the King.

The year that saw the passing of Bisham and the rest of the abodes

of "the Monks of Old," was the year of the appearance of Reginald Pole's treatise *De Unitate Ecclesiastica*. The book gave the lie to almost every one of Henry's recent declarations on the subject of the Church, and in arraigning him at the bar of ecclesiastical history and Catholic doctrine, exposed him to the condemnation of Europe. The rage of the royal Nero, of course, knew no bounds. In vain did he command Pole to return to England without excuse or delay—so as to lose his head! Equally in vain did he instruct Sir Thomas Wyatt and other of his agents abroad, to have his daring relative assassinated.<sup>1</sup> Pole was now a Cardinal and busy pushing forward the initial negotiations and arrangements that were to prepare the way for the Council of Trent. His office as Legate to the Low Countries was all in the same direction—to make peace between the Emperor and France, and so facilitate the opening of the Council that was to do so much to heal the wounds of Holy Church. He was not, as Lingard shows (*History*, vol. v., chap. ii.), engineering a crusade against the Tudor Monster, though, no doubt, the thought of such a movement was uppermost in many minds.

Unable either to get the Cardinal in his toils or murdered out of hand, Henry struck at his kinsfolk and acquaintances. In November, 1538, Henry Lord Montague, Sir Geoffrey Pole, Sir Edmund Neville, the Marquis of Exeter, and Sir Nicholas Carew, were lodged in the Tower on the usual charge of "Treason."

Historic accuracy compels us to admit that Cardinal Pole, like Lord Stafford in 1680, was not "a man beloved of his own realtives," at least in this crisis. His own mother had seen the danger likely to arise from his book and had even spoken of him as "a traitor." His brother, Lord Montague had likewise written letters of remonstrance to him. Needless to say all this was largely *pro forma* to divert Henry's fatal wrath, but whatever was the object all was in vain, and this crowd of noble personages, except Sir Geoffrey Pole, were done to death after the usual judicial mummery on Tower Hill, 3rd January, 1539. Before being officially murdered, Lord Montague asked for absolution for having taken the Oath of Supremacy, and this fact is said to have sealed his fate. The "execution" of these gentlemen, as usual, caused universal horror, and Henry was widely compared to the worst of the persecutors in the days of pagan Rome, though that heathen city, at least, had the advantage of a Pretorian Guard to deliver its citizens from their tyrants when these got past all bearing.

While her family was being prepared for the slaughter—to make a

<sup>1</sup> Two ruffians nearly carried out the King's benign intention concerning his kinsman, but Pole magnanimously forgave the would-be murderers, and merely sent them to the galleys for a few days. But after this he increased his bodyguard which then formed part of every Cardinal's household, at least in Italy.



Tudor holiday—the now aged Countess of Salisbury was living in retirement at Warblington, near Havant in Hampshire. She was arrested there by Fitz William, Earl of Southampton, and Goodrich, Bishop of Ely, 13th November, 1538, and almost immediately removed to Cowdray, Sussex. Here she remained several months, being treated by the Earl of Southampton, her jailer, with great harshness. Her trunks and coffers were searched, and in one of these was found a tunic or “vestment,” embroidered with the Five Wounds. It looks as if an ordinary tabard adorned with one of the devices of the Plantagenets, Margaret’s ancestors, had come to light, but Cromwell and his Master affected to see in this old raiment a traitorous connection with the “Pilgrimage of Grace,” the banner of which was a representation of Our Lord’s Wounds. Another murder by Act of Parliament, of course, went forward, and on 28th June, 1539, the Countess of Salisbury, her eldest son, the Marquis of Exeter, and a number of other persons of lesser degree, including three Irish priests “for carrying letters to the Pope,” were added to the “attainted” victims of the King.

The news of his dear mother’s condemnation greatly affected the Cardinal. “You have heard, I believe, of my mother being condemned by public Council to death, or rather to eternal life,” he wrote on 22nd September, of the same year. “Not only has he who condemned her, condemned to death a woman of seventy—than whom he has no nearer relative, except his daughter, and of whom he used to say there was no holier woman in his kingdom—but at the same time her grandson, son of my brother, a child, the remaining hope of our race.<sup>1</sup> See how far this tyranny has gone, which began with priests, in whose order it only consumed the best, then [went on] to nobles, and there, too, destroyed the best.” (*Epistolæ Poli*, ii. 191.)

On the very day that the obsequious Divan, misnamed Parliament, passed the Bill of Attainder, Margaret was transferred from Cowdray to the Tower. There for two years, she suffered much from cold and neglect, for she had been hurried to London without any time to make the necessary preparations. At last it was resolved to add her venerable name to those of the other martyrs of the Faith. She was sacrificed out of hatred to her son, the great champion of the Church, whose discourses and writings had done so much to expose to the world the villainies of the Tudor Tiberius and his Sejanus, Thomas Cromwell, and make all just men shrink

<sup>1</sup> This “remaining hope of our race” was Edward Courtenay, Earl of Devon, who after a captivity of sixteen years in the Tower, was among the prisoners released by Queen Mary immediately after her accession, 1553. Had he been “possible,” there is little doubt but that the Queen would have married him, and so saved all the odium and trouble that followed from the highly unpopular “Spanish match.” Courtenay, who had probably been ruined in character by neglect and imprisonment, soon left the country, and ended his unworthy life at Padua, 1556.

with horror at the very mention of the names of these two oppressors of the human race. The Countess of Salisbury was taken to East Smithfield early in the morning of 28th May, 1541, and there beheaded on a low block or log in the presence of the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and a few other spectators. The regular headsman was away from London at the time, and his deputy, an unskilful lout, hacked at the blessed Martyr in such a way as to give some foundation to the story afterwards made current by Lord Herbert of Cherbury, that she had refused to lay her head on the block and was, therefore, struck repeatedly by the executioner till she fell dead. Before her death, she prayed for the King, Queen (Catharine Howard), Prince of Wales (later Edward VI), and the Princess Mary. Her last words were: "Blessed are they who suffer persecution for justice' sake for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven."

The body of the Blessed Margaret, Countess of Salisbury, was interred in the Tower, in that Chapel dedicated to St Peter's Chains, whose illustrious dead and historic associations are enshrined in Macaulay's memorable lines. She was declared Blessed with many of the rest of the English Martyrs by Leo XIII, 29th December, 1886. Others than her co-religionists, no doubt, like to reflect that a life, so marked by piety, and so full of griefs ever heroically borne, has after the lapse of nearly four centuries been thus honoured, and that the last direct descendant of the Plantaganet line has her place in the Hagiography of the Church so long associated with their sway.

MAY 28

### JOHNSON, THE BLESSED ROBERT, PRIEST, MARTYR (?-1582)

A SHROPSHIRE man, and, as it is said, sometime in service in a gentleman's family, Robert Johnson left England not long after the "Rising of the North," 1569, in order to avoid the persecution which then became very severe. His preliminary studies seem to have been made at the German College, Rome—the English College not then being in existence—and about 1576, he went to Douay, where in April of that year, he took priests orders. Before leaving for England, he made the "Spiritual Exercises" under the Jesuit Fathers at Louvain. He again made the course when he revisited Rome in 1579, for Mr Johnson was a man of great religious fervour, and as a priest on the then harassed English Mission, he knew both that he carried his life in his hands and the necessity of being always well prepared. Before leaving Rome for the return journey he received from Gregory XIII fifty crowns for his expenses—a gift which was after-

wards made one of the charges against him at his trial. While on the way from Rome to Rheims Mr Johnson unfortunately fell in with the wretched Sledd or Sleydon, the notorious Government spy. Sledd made it his business to mark down priests and students, ingratiate himself into their confidence, and then send all the information he could collect to Burleigh or Walsingham. Mr Johnson, however, despite the apparent Catholic zeal of his new acquaintance, must have had his suspicions, for he had not been very long in the spy's company, before he had to reprove the latter for his loose behaviour. After reaching England, our missionary went to Ingatestone Hall, Essex, the seat of the Petre family, where he presumably officiated as Chaplain, but not long afterwards was arrested in London at the instance of the above-named Sledd. The priest was on his way to a secret meeting of the Catholic Clergy and Laity in Southwark, convened to ascertain the line of action intended to be pursued by the Jesuit Fathers now for the first time coming, officially, on the mission. Mr Johnson was passing through Smithfield when he was seen and denounced by the spy, but the parish constable who came up, being probably a Catholic, made various excuses, and though as in duty bound he followed the priest, the latter was eventually arrested by the bystanders.

From about 12th July, 1580, to 4th December of the same year, Mr Johnson was confined in the Poultry Compter, but in the last-named month was removed to the Tower. Here he was several times racked, though with what object is not clear, but no doubt, his place of confinement—a noisome, underground dungeon, called “Whale's boure,” was almost as great a torture. He was tried and condemned to death with the Blessed Edmund Campion and several others, 16th November, 1581, but was respited till the following May. In the interim, he was called upon to answer questions regarding such points as the Pope's deposing-power, hypothetical invasion by the Pope's order, etc., which, as explained before, were speculations for the schools, and had nothing to do with the matter now in hand. But that his death was for the usual cause, the spiritual supremacy of the Apostolic See, is abundantly clear from the following dialogue which took place between him and the Sheriff at Tyburn:

SHERIFF: “Dost thou acknowledge her [the Queen] supreme head of the Church in ecclesiastical matters?”

BLESSED ROBERT: “I acknowledge her to have as full and great authority as ever Queen Mary had, and more with safety and conscience I cannot give her.”

SHERIFF: “Thou art a traitor, most obstinate.”

BLESSED ROBERT: “If I be a traitor for maintaining this Faith, then

was King Henry and all the Kings and Queens of this realm heretofore and all our ancestors were traitors, for they maintained the same."

Ostensibly the Blessed Robert Johnson died for being, as was alleged, privy to the much advertised "Rheims and Rome Conspiracy," a plot which only had existence in the minds of the English Privy Council, but which was much flourished about at this time to divert the attention of the masses from the fact that the Catholic priests who died at Tyburn, died for the Key-stone article of the Catholic religion and for nothing more. The "Plot," which was supposed to have for its object the murder of the Queen, was always repudiated by the condemned, many of whom were able to prove by witnesses that they were actually in this country when they were asserted to be abroad and deep in the "Conspiracy." The "Plot," however, long served its purpose, in blinding the vulgar to the real point at issue, and in helping to raise up that wall of prejudice which has ever since been one of the chief barriers against the return of the people of this country to the faith of their forefathers.

MAY 28

## SHERT, THE BLESSED JOHN, PRIEST, MARTYR

(?-1582)

CHARLES DODD (HUGH TOOTELL) in his *Church History of England*, states that the Blessed John Shert was born at Shert Hall, near Macclesfield. He took the B.A. degree from Brasenose College, Oxford, 17th January, 1567, and then became a schoolmaster in London, where he was celebrated for his excellent method of teaching. As a clever "coach," he seems to have flourished exceedingly, and might have made a small fortune out of pedagogy, but gave up all to go to Douay to study for the priesthood. For a time, however, he was secretary to Thomas Stapleton, D.D., Professor of Divinity at Douay University, and a theologian termed by Wood "the most learned Roman Catholic of all his time." Such a post under such a scholar, must have been a liberal education in itself. He was enrolled a student at the College (Douay), January, 1576, but made a short stay in England that year, apparently for the purpose of bringing back two students to the College, and then on 9th November, left for Rome, to be one of the number of six students who began the "Roll" of the "Venerable." The College was at first housed in the old Hospitium of the English pilgrims, and the names of the historic first students are:

John Shert (Subdeacon).

Thomas Bell.

John Askew.

John Mush.

John Gore.

William Low.

As the Annals of the English College did not begin to be kept till 1579, there is no record of the Blessed John Shert's ordination in Rome. But he was the first priest of the "Venerabile" to come on the English Mission (after 27th August, 1578), and the second of its forty Martyrs to win his crown. Mr Shert's priestly activities are stated to have been partly in Cheshire and partly in London. These labours must have been very extensive, as within a year or two he was already a marked man, known at least by name to the notorious priest-hunter Geo. Eliot,<sup>1</sup> and inquired after officially by the Privy Council. During his short time on the Mission he passed under the names of Shorte or Stalie, and is supposed to have lodged in or about Holborn, always a great centre of Catholicism by reason of its many taverns, very useful for meetings, and the proximity of the Inns of Court, where so many "papist" lawyers, students, and even priests resided. By July, 1581, however, Mr Shert was certainly in custody, for on the 14th of that month he was in the Tower with two other priests, the Blessed John Payne and George Goodsalve.

Mr Shert was among those indicted for the trumped-up "Rome and Rheims Plot," and on 17th November, 1581, received sentence of death. Like so many of the other Catholic prisoners at this period, he was interrogated on the speculative points relating to the exercise of the papal authority, which, as before observed, were matters for the schools, and not for Courts of Law, which deal only with overt acts. After long and weary months of imprisonment, he suffered at Tyburn on 28th May, 1582, together with the Blessed Thomas Ford, whose hanging and disembowelling he had first to witness before his own end came. He solemnly disclaimed any part in the treasons alleged against him, adding: "I acknowledge her [Elizabeth] for my Sovereign Lady and Queen, for whose prosperous estate and well-doing I did always pray." Asked about her supreme governorship over the Church of England, he replied: "I will give to Cæsar that which is his, and to God that which belongeth to God. She is not nor cannot be [Supreme Head], nor any other but only the Supreme Pastor." As the executioner was about to do his fell work, the Martyr exclaimed: "Domine, Jesu Christe, Fili Dei Vivi, pone passionem, crucem et mortem tuam inter judicium tuum et animam meam," and so saying, he passed through his last tribulation to life eternal.

<sup>1</sup> Styled by the Catholics, "Judas" Eliot!

MAY 29

THIRKELD, THE BLESSED RICHARD, PRIEST, MARTYR  
(?-1583)

THE name of the Blessed Richard Thirkeld, which is also spelt Thirkell, Therkeld, and Thrirkelde, may be presumed to be of ancient Saxon origin. He was born at Cunsley, Durham, and was, it seems, a student at Queen's College, Oxford, 1564-5. The gap between his Oxford career and his going to Douay has not been filled up. He was priested at Rheims, April 1579, together with William Hanse, brother of the Martyr, the Blessed Everard Hanse. Mr Thirkeld's fervour was such that after the ordination he observed to his brother priest, "God alone knows how great a gift this is that has been conferred upon us this day!" The subject of the ineffable eucharistic sacrifice became his constant meditation, and under its influence he advanced very far in spiritual perfection.

After returning to England, the Blessed Richard Thirkeld laboured in Yorkshire, and was frequently entertained by the Venerable Margaret Clitherow in the house at York which she kept for the use of the missionary priests. Mr Thirkeld not only visited and strengthened the persecuted faithful in his wide district, but he also compiled a history of those of the County of York, who up to that time had given their lives for the old religion. Unfortunately, this document subsequently fell into the hands of the pursuivants and was destroyed. No doubt it contained many valuable personal recollections and local information, generally, which would have thrown much light on the difficulties and sufferings of our Catholic forefathers during the mid-Elizabethan regime. While visiting a poor Catholic in prison at Kidcote Jail, Ousebridge, on 24th March, 1583, Mr Thirkeld was arrested by three priest-hunters and taken before the Lord Mayor. He made no disguise of his real character, but refused to say anything that might bring others into trouble. By means of his keys, his belongings were traced to the house of a poor widow, and all the books of theology and devotion he possessed were taken to the market-place and burnt.

He was tried at the York Assizes, 27th May, appearing in Court, to the great surprise of all, in a priest's cassock and biretta! He was condemned to death for the then recently created treasonable offence of having absolved and reconciled certain of the Queen's subjects to the Church of Rome. After receiving sentence of death, the worthy priest continued to perpetrate this "treasonable" act, for he instructed, reconciled and absolved several condemned felons in the Castle Prison, and so enabled them to make their peace with God and to die well. Before

his trial he had a controversy with the Dean of York. The Church of England at that time was the most Protestant perhaps of all the "reformed" bodies, and nearly all its clergy had gone over to Calvinism. The priest showed the Dean that such doctrines as the Invocation of Saints, and the Authority of the Pope are to be found over and over again in the writings of the Fathers, as are the other so-called "popish" points of belief, and he referred that dignity principally to the works of St Augustine. This led to an angry scene, but the priest kept to his point until the matter ended.

On 29th May, 1583, the Blessed Richard suffered at the York Tyburn, at Knavesmire. To prevent any relics of the holy Martyr from being collected by the faithful, the body was afterwards burnt in a great fire, and the ashes scattered. In spite of this precaution, a small piece of linen from the Martyr's shirt is venerated at St Benedict's Priory, Colwich. It is inscribed: "Of ye shirt of Mr Thirkeld pt. and mart. at York." How it came to be preserved is not stated. Several letters of the Martyr, full of spiritual unction, are also extant, written by him shortly before he consummated his glorious course.

[Challoner: *Memoirs*. B. Camm: *Eng. Martyrs*, vol. i.]

MAY 30

## COTTAM, THE BLESSED THOMAS, MARTYR

(1549-1582)

AMONG the Catholic non-jurors of England in 1715, was a family named Cottam, of Dilworth in Lancashire, a county always very staunch to the ancient Faith, and at that time so much in sympathy with the exiled James III and VIII, as to supply by far the largest part of the English contingent of the Jacobite Army which, under the inept Mr Foster, M.P., surrendered at Preston to Generals Wills and Carpenter on 1st November of that year. Yet the Cottams had not always been Catholic. Lawrence Cottam, the Squire of Dilworth, like so many of his kind, had gone with the tide, and accepted the State ecclesiastical arrangements as made by Henry VIII, and disarranged by Edward VI and his Zwinglian advisers. Thomas Cottam, the Squire's son, was born 1549, and educated at Oxford, at the College with the name which time has changed from comic to venerable. He graduated B.A. from Brasenose, 23rd March, 1568, and then, like so many other young 'Varsity men before and since, did a turn of school-mastering. While teaching schoolboys in London, Lily's famous *Grammar*,

beloved of Etonians! Mr Cottam became acquainted with Mr Thomas Pound of Belmont, a Catholic gentleman, who had long been in prison for the Faith. Through Pound's godly life and conversation, as the phrase then went, Mr Cottam was led back to the Church of his forefathers some time prior to 1575. Later, he gratefully reminded his benefactor of this in a letter containing the following passage: "Through you the divine mercy recalled me from my wanderings, raised me up when fallen, sustained me in my wavering, preserved me in my trials, restored me when lost."

It has been supposed that at the time when this letter was written, or a little later, Mr Cottam was already a student for the priesthood at Douay. He was ordained Deacon at Cambrai in December, 1577, and after a visit to England, returned in May of the next year (1578). Most of the following year was spent in study at Rome, partly it seems at the German College. Mr Cottam while in the Eternal City was admitted a novice of the Society of Jesus, being consumed with zeal to go to India and there labour in a field rendered illustrious by the then (comparatively) recent missionary exploits of St Francis Xavier. The new novice's Superiors, nowever, did not consider him "a man of great or perhaps even of average talents" (Letter of the Father-General S.J. to Fr. Wm. Crichton, Provincial at Lyons). His health, moreover, was bad, and it was ultimately agreed that he should go to France or England to recuperate, with the prospect of returning and maybe of going to India if he got better. This was the understanding, so that Mr Cottam was never formally dismissed from the Society, of which he has always been generally regarded as one of the Martyrs. He returned to Rheims in company with the Rev. Robert Johnson, later martyred. He was ordained priest at Soissons, and probably on 28th May (Ember Saturday), and on 5th June, left for the English Mission together with Edward Rishton, Dr Humphrey Ely, then a layman and Doctor of Laws of Douay University,<sup>1</sup> John Hart, and Thomas Crane. But the quartette were already marked men. In coming from Rome to Rheims, Mr Cottam had fallen in with the subsequently notorious spy, Sledd or Sleydon, who appears to have been "all sorts of things," including the post of serving-man to Dr Saunderson in Rome, and a student at Rheims. He was a fellow of loose morals and no principle, and so soon turned informer and put himself at the disposal of Burleigh as a detector of priests. Sledd had already sent on information about Mr Cottam and his party, so that when the four landed at Dover, they were at once detained and searched. Dr Ely had often crossed and recrossed before, and was well known to the authorities at Dover by sight. He was no doubt re-

<sup>1</sup> He subsequently became a priest (1582) and died Professor of the Canon and Civil Law at Pont-à-Mousson in 1604.



garded as a mere man of business, so was allowed to go, but not so Mr Cottam, who, after some delay, was, to save further expense, delivered over to Dr Ely under bond, the latter undertaking to give him up to Lord Cobham, the Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, then in London. As a Catholic, Dr Ely resolved not to carry out the order of the Mayor of Dover, and on reaching London he parted with his legal charge. But Mr Cottam being of very tender conscience, considered that he was bound to give himself up rather than risk getting his friend the doctor into trouble, and on consulting divines received two replies—one advising and the other denying the moral necessity of the proposed course! The problem was solved by the host of an Inn at Dover, where Mr Cottam had stopped during his detention, and who had made himself responsible for his safe custody, coming up to London and insisting on either the doctor or the priest surrendering to the authorities. Mr Cottam then at once gave himself up and was lodged after a time in the Marshalsea (27th June, 1580). In the following December he was transferred to the Tower, and so far from receiving better treatment for his very honourable conduct in surrendering himself, was inhumanly tortured on the “Scavenger’s Daughter,” not to discover alleged plots and conspiracies, but merely to elicit for what sins penances had been imposed upon him! Mr Cottam was indicted at Westminster Hall, 14th November, 1581, together with the Blessed Edmund Campion, Sherwin, Kirby, Bosgrave, Johnson, Orton, and Rish-ton. The charge was coming into England to raise a rebellion against the Queen!

At the trial, Mr Cottam greatly insisted that his whole object in coming to this country was merely for his health, having been advised to do so by the doctors in Rome. That being attained, it had been his intention, he said, to proceed as a missionary to the Indies. He also repudiated any ownership of a book entitled *Tractatus Conscientiæ*, for the (supposed) purpose of enabling Catholics to evade questions about the royal supremacy, etc., which work it was alleged had been found among his possessions. He was, nevertheless, convicted and sentenced to death. Like so many priests at that time he found means to offer Holy Mass in his cell before the end. At Tyburn, on 30th May, 1582, he repeated the Psalm *Miserere* with the *Pater*, *Ave* and other usual prayers, asking all Catholics present to pray for him and for the realm, “that God would call this people to repentance to see and acknowledge their sins.” When the executioner began the ripping and quartering part of the sentence, a coarse canvas shirt was found on the martyr’s body in default it is supposed, of a haircloth. The mangled remains of the Blessed Father and those of his fellow-martyrs were not distributed around the town, according to custom, but were buried under the gallows, that no relics

might be taken away by their Catholic brethren, as so often happened at that time.

[H. Foley: *Records of the English Province S. J.*, vol ii. Part of the carpal bone of the Martyr and the corporal used by him at his Mass in the Tower, are preserved at Stonyhurst College. A piece of the Martyr's heart is among the relics at the Archbishop's House, Westminster.]

MAY 30

### ST JOAN OF ARC, VIRGIN

(1412-1431)

TRANSPARENTLY simple as were the whole life and actions of the spotless Maid of Orleans, her biography is nevertheless one that presents a considerable initial difficulty. It is a theme that requires a sort of historical disquisition by way of introduction. The reason of this is, of course, that her personal narrative is so interwoven not merely with the complicated history of France and England during the period of her short and glorious career, but that considerable reference has to be made to events immediately preceding the stirring years that witnessed Joan's meteoric rise, triumphant progress, and tragic death.

When Edward III took active steps to enforce his shadowy claim to the Throne of France, and so began the hideous welter of blood and ruin known as the Hundred Years War, he bequeathed that legacy of hatred which from age to age has divided the two nations more effectually than the Channel that physically separates them. The renewal of that claim by Henry V in 1415, however, has no such measure of guilt. For Henry, according to Professor York Powell, seems to have been really impressed by the sporadic, but none the less formidable Lollard movement, with its scheme of a sort of federal republic by captains over each shire, and Lord Cobham (Sir John Oldcastle) as head or president over all. This and the deadly, though for the time being slumbering, feud between the descendants of Edward III, and also the knowledge of the inferior claim of his own branch of the family to the Crown, made Henry very desirous of securing a place of independent retreat in case of drastic political changes. At the time of his death, 1422, all fear of a possible revolution had passed away. His own commanding abilities, the stupendous victory of Agincourt and other brilliant successes in France, had made him one of the first monarchs in Europe, and, to say the truth, this "England's Darling" thoroughly

deserved his good fortune, for after becoming master of the north of France, Henry had introduced order and good government into a country not only harassed by war, but long notoriously oppressed by its own despotic *seigneurs* and the other "incidents" of a feudalism easily the most galling in Europe. On the French side not only was the King, Charles VI, mad, and the Dauphin a minor, but the members of the royal family of France were at open feud with each other, each faction being quite prepared to aid the invader for its own private ends. Ever since 1407, there had been a more or less continuous civil war in the distracted country between the Armagnacs and the House of Burgundy, arising out of the murder of the Duke of Orleans, the King's brother, by John, Duke of Burgundy. Four years later, Burgundy openly requested and received help from England in the form of money, knights and archers. Even the death of Henry V did not alter much the situation of affairs in France. His able brother, John, Duke of Bedford, continued his wise rule over the spheres of English influence. He enforced strict justice and good order, put down the brigands who often, in the uniforms of English soldiers, oppressed the wretched peasantry, fostered trade and lightened the taxes, so that many Frenchmen, especially of the merchant class, welcomed, rather than opposed, so just and firm a rule. Paris was not only under the English, but was curiously enough strongly pro-English, so that it seemed not unlikely that the little Henry VI, who when ten years old was actually crowned King of France at Notre Dame, would eventually rule without opposition over the two nations. But, meanwhile, Charles VI had died and with the accession of his son there also arose a new and strong feeling of patriotism and of "France for the French." Charles VII, though emphatically not "every inch a King," was at least a rallying point for the party of *la Patrie*, which now concentrated all its efforts on saving the City of Orleans then closely invested by Thomas de Montacute, Earl of Salisbury. After his death—from a splinter of a cannon-shot—the siege was continued by the Earl of Suffolk, and great were the sufferings of the miserable inhabitants. The Scots had long been in France fighting side by side with their natural allies, the French, the hereditary foe of both nations, but the combined effort of Sir John Stewart and the Count de Clermont to prevent food from being brought up to the besiegers, ended in the severe defeat of Rouvray, humorously known as the "Battle of the Herrings."<sup>1</sup> The deadly shafts of the English Archers again proved too much for French lance and Scottish broadsword, and so desperate grew the situation of the city, that not only was a surrender proposed, but the Dauphin, ever faint-hearted, thought of abandoning France, at least

<sup>1</sup> From the rampart of herring barrels and flour carts with which the English convoys protected themselves against the Franco-Scottish attack.

for a time. It was at this point of the national crisis, that effectual help came, and from the most unlooked for quarter.

On 6th January, 1412, there was born at the obscure village of Domremy, on the banks of the Meuse, and near the fair and typically French province of Lorraine, Jeannette, or Jeanne, or Joan D'Arc, daughter of pious parents of the peasant class. The family-name seems to have been originally spelt Darc. Her father, James, and mother, Isobel Darc were not only devout and laborious, as became a son and daughter of Catholic and rural France, but they are described as having been people well endowed with that strong self-reliance, shrewd common sense, and sturdy independence, which modern "civilization" with its constant bureaucratic interference, and widespread, free, uniform "education," has rendered almost as extinct as the classical case of the Dodo! Jeanne, their daughter, certainly, and no doubt the other children as well, inherited these splendid and irreplaceable qualities in a very marked degree. Up to about the age of sixteen, Jeanne or Joan, to call her by her most generally known name, led the ordinary life of a peasant girl of her class, doing her part in ploughing, sowing and harvesting, tending the parental flocks, and at home spinning hemp and wool, and attending to other feminine domestic duties. She was a singularly pious girl, even among a simple and devout people, hearing Mass daily, making frequent visits to the Blessed Sacrament, and often undertaking journeys of devotion to places of religious repute. Messire Guillaume Fronte, the worthy Curé of Domremy, later left a record that Joan was "a simple and good girl; pious, well brought up and God-fearing, and without her like in the whole village." To her other acts of personal piety, she added great charity to the poor, even to the extent of giving up occasionally her own bed to some necessitous wanderer, and sleeping herself on the floor by the hearth.

The terrible foreign war which had so long devastated France, was painfully brought home to the retired village-folk of Domremy by the actual experience of invasion itself. The poor people of Domremy had more than once to flee before the bands of marauders who warred on the unhappy natives in the name of one or other of the contending parties, and on one occasion the humble home of the Darcs was plundered and burnt to the ground! This dreadful experience and also some old prophecies to the effect that the "fair realm of France" was to be delivered from the terrible English by a woman, made a great impression on little Joan, and the theme and all that it stood for, soon became her constant meditation and the subject of most fervent prayer.

On the 17th of August, 1424, the French and Scots under the Earl of Douglas (Duc de Tourraine), met with an overwhelming defeat

at Verneuil, at the hands of the Duke of Bedford. So many Scots and Frenchmen fell beneath the "cloth yard" hail of the English Archers, that the field resembled a shambles rather than a place of battle! The news of this appalling catastrophe, which for the time stunned every French Nationalist, set Joan praying the more. The following summer (1425) Joan was one midday in her father's garden, when, as she said: "I heard a voice from God for my help and guidance. The first time I heard this voice, I was very much frightened. I heard this voice to my right towards the Church. Rarely do I hear it without its being accompanied by a light. . . . I believe it was sent to me from God. When I heard it for the third time, I recognized that it was the voice of an Angel." She always asserted that she was as sure that the voice came from God, as she was as sure of the Christian Faith!

But the "Voices" did not come alone. They were presently accompanied by visions of the holy Angels, accompanied by St Michael the Archangel, and at other times by Angels with apparitions of St Catharine and St Margaret (Queen of Scotland, *d.* 1093). These Saints as described by her were adorned with "beautiful and precious" crowns, and the voices were sweet and subdued, yet unmistakable in their commands.

At first, the messages were personal and general. Joan was bidden to continue to be a good girl, to go often to Church and put her trust in God. Then at last came the crowning order. She must leave Domremy and go and deliver Orleans. Joan, needless to say, was dumbfounded! She, a poor, unlettered peasant girl, knowing nothing of the science of war or of the world, ordered to go forth and tell this mysterious occurrence and command to great lords and captains, and persons in authority generally! The idea might well seem too absurd even for the wildest dreamer, but the visions continued, and the Voices became more imperious than before!

Joan's whole conduct throughout this extraordinary episode, shows that she was no visionary, no dreamer nor schemer, eager to be led, but a girl of remarkable common sense and most rare prudence. She consulted her uncle, Durant Laxart (or Durand Lassois), a sensible, matter-of-fact man, who at first did not put any credence in what she told him, but finding by time and experience how insistent his niece was, and how free her narrative was from any taint of personal conceit or self-seeking, the shrewd yeoman finally agreed to do as she requested. This was to go with her to Vaucouleurs to see the King's Commander, Robert de Baudricourt, there, and tell him of her mission and of the heavenly commands which dictated it. Joan succeeded so far in getting more than one interview with de Baudricourt, though, of course, it was not until after many difficulties had been surmounted—harsh rebuffs, ridicule, wearisome delays—all of which

had to go towards the testing and perfecting of the wondrous maid. Military leaders in all campaigns are accustomed to be harassed by cranks and self-styled geniuses eager to show them how "to win the war," so we cannot perhaps wonder at de Baudricourt's extreme reluctance to listen to, much less to be impressed by, this apparently impossible story. But listen, at length, the rough but honest soldier did. In brief, her communication was that she was to go to the "gentle Dauphin," obtain an army from him to raise the siege of Orleans—"take him to be annointed at Rheims, win back Paris and drive the English from the realm."

Armed with a letter from de Baudricourt and accompanied by Jean de Novelonpont, her two brothers, and a suitable escort, Joan, after a perilous journey through the territory of the Burgundians—the Allies of the English—reached Chinon on 6th March. She recognized the Dauphin in spite of his well-prepared disguise, and delivered her message in open court. She conjured him by St Louis and *St Charlemagne* to believe her. Prelates, courtiers, lawyers, and the worldly-wise generally, had to be won over, but in the end, Joan, clad in bright armour and mounted on a coal-black steed, was allowed to have her way and proceed with the army detailed to raise the siege of Orleans. She carried a sacred sword found, according to her prophecy, under the altar of the Church of St Catharine de Fierbois, and bore a white banner adorned with lilies, and the holy names: "Jhesus, Maria," separated by a cross.

The English had raised a quantity of very strong earthworks and bastions about the city, and it is not quite clear how Joan and the relieving force with her came to pass, as they did, into the beleaguered place. For though the besiegers swore to burn "La Pucelle" as a witch, if they caught her, "they did not try to stop the army that was with her from coming into the town."<sup>1</sup> In the series of desperate sorties that now ensued, the English, though hitherto seemingly invincible, so that two hundred of them used easily to rout four times that number of Frenchmen (Dunois), were everywhere worsted, and their chain of works one by one destroyed. Amidst all this heavy fighting, the glorious Maid was the life and soul of her countrymen, even though when wounded severely, as she was, by an arrow during one of the assaults. In the attack on the great "bastille" known as "Les Tourelles," she said to her soldiers: "Wait till my banner touches the fort, then go in and all is yours." They did so, and very soon the place was in their hands. The siege of Orleans was raised, 9th May, 1429. In the next campaign, victory everywhere followed the wondrous "Pucelle"—at Jargeau Troyes, Beaugency, and Chalons. But Joan did not rely on courage and enthusiasm alone. She

<sup>1</sup> F. York Powell: *History of England*, vol. ii.

insisted on the army of the deliverance purging itself from the sins and scandals which had filled the encampments and garrison towns with disorders and immoralities, and, indeed, the mere presence of the stainless Maid was almost of itself enough to repress all that was morally wrong. As a leader, this girl of eighteen showed herself not only valiant to an extraordinary degree, but she displayed military qualities that can only be described as Napoleonic. In all the battles up to her appearance in the field, the mighty red yew bows of the English Archers, and their cloth-yard shafts tipped with keenest steel, calculated to pierce the finest mail and plate, had ever proved irresistible. To the deadly arrow-volleys of the foe, Joan now opposed the concentrated fire of field-pieces, with the result that the old archer formations were broken up and their discharges rendered far less effective.

On 17th July, 1429, the Dauphin was solemnly crowned at Rheims, and duly anointed from the sacred *Ampoule*, traditionally believed to have been used at the baptism of Clovis.<sup>1</sup> Joan, who, during the imposing and triumphant ceremony had stood by the King amidst the Peers of France with the Oriflamme in her hand, now declared her mission accomplished and begged leave to be allowed to return to her home. Her earnest request was refused. She and her family, however, were ennobled, though Joan never sought any worldly distinction being more than satisfied that her heaven-appointed task to deliver France from the foe and hand her country over to its rightful King, had at last been achieved. As usual, Joan spoke but the simple truth when she declared her life-work finished. In the sortie from Compiègne on 24th May, 1430, the Maid was taken prisoner by the Burgundians, and after four months' imprisonment in the Castle of Beaulieu was sold to the Duke of Bedford by John of Luxembourg for 10,000 livres.

What Burke wrote about "the age of Chivalry" in 1794, applies with even greater force to the disgraceful epoch of 1430-31. For all its mailed knights and belted counts and earls, its portcullised castles and streaming pennons, "the age of Chivalry" by the mid-fifteenth century was indeed "gone." We gladly refrain from detailing the barbarous and cowardly insults and outrages that were now heaped upon the defenceless "Pucelle" by her infamous captors. The subject, bad as it is, is, however, less odious than that of the shameful abandonment of the Maid by the poltroon Charles VII and his contemptible Court. Vile as the conduct

<sup>1</sup> The Ampoule (Latin *Ampulla*), was a glass cruet containing the chrism used for the anointing of the Kings of France at their Coronation (*Sacre*) at Rheims. The ancient Ampoule of Rheims was broken by a Jacobin during the Revolution, but a portion of it is said to have been preserved, and the oil contained therein was used at the Coronation of Charles X—the last ceremony of its kind in France—in 1825.

of the English was, these brutal soldiers and officials were after all, Joan's sworn enemies—the men from whose grasp she had snatched at the eleventh hour the glittering prize of victory. But the cur of a King and his infamous minions owed everything to Joan's prowess, and they abandoned the incomparable Maid without even apparently considering further her cruel fate!

The marvellous successes of the "Pucelle" had been widely attributed by her enemies to sorcery, and Bedford, in fact, had openly denounced the amazing heroine in the full tide of her victories as a "Lyme of the Feende!" As a prisoner of war, Joan could not legally be punished, but as a reputed witch, matters were very different, and it was resolved to prostitute justice and pervert the canon law to encompass her destruction. The abettors and tools of this horrible crime were the vile Pierre Cauchon, Bishop of Beauvais and a "Court" of some fifty ecclesiastics and lawyers of a like kidney, and all, of course, Bedford's men. The trial of the Maid began at Rouen on Wednesday, 21st February, 1431, and with a few adjournments the horrid travesty of justice lasted till 23rd May. Without help of any kind, the Maid heroically faced her judges, or murderers rather, consistently maintaining that her Voices and her Mission were alike from God. A garbled account of her case was submitted to the Sorbonne, which, being entirely in the English interest, returned a condemnation—though a qualified one—of the accused. By a base trick—well worthy the abandoned wretches whose "hour" it was—Joan was led to retract, though when Cauchon and some of his assessors saw her in prison on 28th May, she withdrew her so-called "recantation" and reaffirmed her belief in the divine nature of her cause. This was enough. As a relapsed heretic, Joan was burned to death in the Market Place at Rouen, 30th May, 1431—and the world has ever since shuddered at the crime! "My voices were from God," declared the dying heroine of France, who in death as in life, was true to her sacred cause.

Twenty-four years after this unspeakable crime, Pope Calixtus III, at the representation of Joan's family and faithful friends, caused the whole process to be reinvestigated, with the result that the "trial" was declared to be "full of iniquity," and "manifest errors in fact as in law." The verdict in consequence was proclaimed "null, non-existent, and without value or effect." Solemnly published in the Archbishop's Palace at Rouen, and immediately throughout France, the reversal of the infamous sentence was received everywhere as "the triumph of truth and justice." The place of Joan's fiery death was marked by a splendid cross, and the day of her passing from the injustice of the world to the joys of Paradise, kept, especially at Orleans, as a solemn feast. Belief in the Maid's heroic sanctity grew with time, and passed from France over the whole Catholic world.

On 8th May, 1869, the Archbishops and Bishops of France presented



a petition for her canonization, and quarter of a century later (27th January, 1894), Pope Leo XIII declared "this most perfect daughter of her Church"—as the late Andrew Lang styled her—"Venerable." Her Beatification at St Peter's on 11th April, 1909, in the presence of seventy-five Archbishops and Bishops of France and 40,000 French pilgrims, preceded by eleven years the crowning act of the Canonization of the illustrious Maid by Benedict XV, on 16th May, 1920. The Great War had ended, and in the comparative quietude that followed the strife and tumult of those fateful years, all lovers of truth and justice had opportunity to join joyfully, at least in spirit, with the great and sacred act which irrevocably enrolled Joan of Arc among the celestial company of the Saints.

It has often been asked, in what precisely did the "Mission" of St Joan consist? For clearly the mere temporal independence of her country could scarcely have formed its object, especially in view of the miserable, anarchic state of France at that time, and the undoubtedly excellent prospect of good and settled government held out by the probability of English rule. Even many Frenchmen, as we have seen, having enjoyed the blessings of peace, order, and civil justice under Bedford, were quite prepared to acquiesce in a change of rulers. Catholic writers explain the meaning and scope of the mysterious "Mission," thus: If France had passed definitely under the rule of England, then in the following century the powerful Huguenot party which subsequently arose, would, backed by the might of the Tudor dynasty, have wrested from the Church her "eldest daughter," and France thus have been lost to the Faith. Even as it was, this eventuality came within measurable distance of being accomplished! The determination and vast resources of Protestant England would have made that menace a certainty. With the loss of France would have disappeared entirely, or rather never have come into being at all, the religious orders and congregations, the colleges, schools and numberless other ecclesiastical foundations which in the past three centuries have so powerfully extended, not only in France, but throughout the world, the teaching and influence of the Church. Not merely if France be largely Catholic to-day, but if all the blessings and advantages just named have been preserved to the Church, are facts entirely due, under God, to the Glorious Maid whose unflinching heroism, constancy, and devotion have given us the victory!

[A vast and almost entirely enthusiastic literature has grown up around the life and history of St Joan of Arc. Admirable biographies of the Saint are to be found in English by the late Andrew Lang (*The Maid of France*), and by Monsignor

Stapleton-Barnes (*Blessed Joan the Maid*). *St Joan of Arc*, a short pamphlet, *Life*, by J. B. Milburn (Cath. Truth Society), also gives an excellent summary of St Joan and her time. English readers, too, are deeply indebted to the learned researches of the late Canon Wyndham of Westminster, which have done a vast deal to present a true and well-informed account of the wondrous heroine, and so made the labours of her many biographers much easier than they otherwise would have been.

MAY 31

## ST ANGELA MERICI, VIRGIN

(1474-1540)

THOUGH doubtless the bright lights and heavy shades of virtue and vice were undulating all over Italy, as elsewhere, when St Angela Merici was born at Desinzano, a small country town to the south-west of Lake Garda, 21st March, 1474, it is pleasant to think that she was one of the group of holy women who either contemporary with, or just before her, have so powerfully aided to foster the traditional piety of Italian rural society. The very year of Angela's birth, the Blessed Catarina de Palanza was edifying Verese, while St Veronica of Milan was the wonder for sanctity of that great and luxurious city. At Orzinovi, in the diocese of Brescia, the Blessed Stefana Quinzani, and at Mantua, the Blessed Osanna Andreasi, were just reaching womanhood and both were later to have their share in the influencing of St Angela's life.

The father of Angela was Giovanni Tommaso Merici. Her mother's maiden name was Biancosi, but there is, indeed, "a sad dearth" with regard to the family history of the Saint. There were besides Angela four other children, one, an elder Sister to whom she was so dearly attached and three others. One of these was a brother equally dear to Angela, but as no reference is made to the rest, it has been surmised that they were either dead at, or shortly after, the time of Angela's birth. The Merici family seem to have been of the upper middle class, well off, indeed, but not of noble descent, though some branches of the stock afterwards married into the patrician houses of Bertalozzi, the Counts Lanfranchi and the Counts of Tracagno.

In the Merici household the pious custom of family prayers every night was the rule, and not only that, but Angela's father made it his practice to read daily to his children extracts from the *Lives of the Saints*, especially those passages which illustrated the practical aspects of the

piety of holy personages of all ages. Very soon little Angela and her sister, who, as before remarked, was somewhat older than herself, and also, it is said, her little brother, were so fired by these stirring examples of devout heroism in the service of God and our neighbour, that they tried to carry out in their own young lives some of the mortifications and other ascetic practices associated with the wonderful characters whose histories they had heard read. There is, of course, nothing priggish or affected in this. It is part of that innate desire to chastise the body and bring it into subjection, which from the days of St Paul downward forms that ideal of holiness through mortification which presents itself to every Catholic who is really seeking the Kingdom of God and His justice. But midnight vigils, long prayers and fasts are not for children, nor, indeed, for anyone without due authorization, and the reader, therefore, will not be surprised to learn that these ascetic exuberances were soon put a stop to by the wise parents of our Saint. Though Angela was so holy a child, and her father and mother, as we have seen, were persons of uncommon piety, she did not make her first Communion till she was thirteen years of age—a very advanced period of her life, even when all allowances are made for whatever circumstances may have retarded the initial reception of the holy and life-giving Sacrament. Had she lived two centuries later, no doubt this fact would have been ascribed by her biographers to the influence of Jansenism, but whatever the cause may have been, her first Holy Communion was soon followed by two great sorrows—the deaths of her father and her sister. In families united by deep devotion and close affection, such occurrences are always of the nature of calamities, but in this instance the tragedies were heightened by the further consideration that in neither case did the deceased receive the last Sacraments! We at once recall the dramatic lament of the troubled ghost on the battlements of Elsinore at a deprivation so poignant to every Catholic heart,<sup>1</sup> but to Angela these deaths, and that of her sister especially, were almost crushing blows. But like every heroic nature, she refused to let mere grief stand in the way of duty. Besides, there were her widowed mother and young brother and the affairs of the family to attend to, and it was at this crisis that she received the first of the several recorded great spiritual manifestations which were to be vouchsafed her during her life. This was the Vision of Our Lady surrounded by the holy Angels, which appeared to her during the harvest-time near a farmhouse, known as Le Grezze on the Macchetto road, near her home. At the same time, she distinctly heard the words: “Angela, only persevere in the path you are following, and you shall have a share with us in the glory you behold.” This apparition must have greatly fortified the Saint and enabled her to endure her

<sup>1</sup> *Hamlet*: act i., scene iv.

third bereavement, that of her dear mother, which occurred not long afterwards. Angela and her brother were now left alone in the world, and this being the case, their maternal uncle, Biancosi, who lived at Salo, kindly invited his nephew and niece to take up their abode with him and his family at the latter place. It was during the early part of their stay there, that Angela and her brother tried to carry out the idea of a hermit life in the mountainous country around Lake Garda. But the would-be St Scholastica and St Benedict were brought back to their good uncle's house, for other reasons apart, the times were not favourable to a revival of the eremitical life of the early ages. France and Venice were at war, and the troops of Charles VIII were making their presence felt everywhere. Angela's devotion to her brother seems to have been at this time greatly intensified owing to a probable interior admonition of his early death, which occurred not long after the episode just referred to.

When Angela was twenty-two, she returned to her own home at Desinzano, the property of which, meanwhile, had been very carefully managed by her good uncle from Salo. She took with her a young lady of about her own age, and one like her, truly devout. The two were enrolled in the Third Order of St Francis, and though they did not at this time open a school in their house as has been alleged, they did interest themselves greatly in the religious instruction of children of the poorer class. This and the practice of prayer and various austerities became the rule of Angela and her companion for many years, and, indeed, it may be said to have formed the only actual training for what was to be her life-work. Among her neighbours at Desinzano were a gentleman and his wife, Jerome and Caterina Patengoli, who soon conceived a great admiration for the virtues and practical good works of their two young friends. They both belonged to the city of Brescia—the Brixia of the Romans—which had but a few years before been stormed by the French under that much-vaunted pattern of Chivalry, Gaston de Foix, and subjected to one of the most horrible pillages and massacres in history!<sup>1</sup> Yet with the wonderful recuperativeness of the Latin race, the enterprising people of the place were rapidly rebuilding their stricken city. The Patengolis were desirous of having Angela with them to console them for the loss of their own dear children snatched from them by one of those fatal epidemics which follow in the wake of war. With the consent of the Franciscan Superiors of the Third Order, without whose advice she never undertook any work of

<sup>1</sup> Brescia was taken by the French under Gaston de Foix, Feb. 1512, when, it is said, 40,000 of the inhabitants were massacred! The plunder was valued at three millions of crowns. *A History of France to the Fall of the Second Empire*, by W. H. Jervis. (John Murray, 1898.)

importance, Angela, in 1522, went to live in Brescia with her good friends the Patengolis. There she soon became the prime mover of another series of beneficent works, and a pious citizen, named Antonio dei Romani, was so impressed by the good results of her labours, that he offered her a large room in his own house for the meetings of the young persons, especially those of her own sex, who came to her for instruction and spiritual advice. In May, 1524, Angela and her cousin, Bartolemeo Biancosi, went with a large body of pilgrims to the Holy Land, and it was during the progress of the voyage there, from Venice, that the Saint was struck with blindness. Though she had always longed to see the places associated with Our Lord's life and death, she accepted this mysterious affliction with her usual resignation to the divine will. During her stay in Palestine, she was led from place to place, unable to see, but interiorly filled with extraordinary devotion, so that although not being able visibly to behold what she had so long pictured to herself, she *felt*, as it were, the effect of the wondrous sanctity of each sacred shrine in a way not comprehended by ordinary visitors. In the course of the return voyage, Angela and the pilgrims, including Monsignor Paola della Puglea, one of the Pope's chamberlains, visited a Church at Canea, in the island of Candia, containing a miraculous crucifix. Angela and the company prayed fervently there that sight might be restored to her, if such was God's will, when, to the amazement of all, she cried out that she could see! This wonderful cure took place on 4th October, 1524, a few weeks before the party landed at Venice. After reaching the city-queen of the Adriatic, Angela was offered by Prince Guistiniani and the Senators of the Doge, the post of general superintendent of several charitable institutions in the city, but she declined the offer, convinced that her mission was to found an institute of religious women devoted to the education of girls. So uppermost did this conviction become, that, next year, she journeyed to Rome to lay her intention before the Pope. Clement VII, who had already heard of her eminent holiness and many spiritual favours from Monsignor della Puglea and others, received her with marks of great distinction and was even anxious that she should stay in Rome and pursue her good works there, but Angela assured the Pontiff that her mission lay elsewhere. The Holy Father dismissed her with his blessing and words of encouragement, and it is well that the future foundress of the Ursulines did not stay in Rome, for within two years took place the awful sack of the city by the Constable de Bourbon and his army, or rabble rather, of German Lutherans and Italian and Spanish renegades, when, for the space of nine months, bloodshed, licentiousness and pillage ran riot in the Capital of Christendom.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Constable de Bourbon was slain by a shot from an arquebus just as his ruffianly followers entered Rome. Benvenuto Cellini has claimed the honour of firing the shot in question,

For nearly five years longer, the horrifying struggle between Charles V and Francis continued. To it, and to it alone, must be ascribed most of the terrible moral and other evils which thirty years later called for the utmost efforts of St Charles Borromeo and the other apostolic leaders of the Counter-Reformation to remove. Until peace had been established and ratified by the Coronation of the Emperor by the Pope at Bologna, 1530, it was useless to think of setting up a new religious order or institute, however useful or well conceived. Meanwhile, Angela had not been idle. She had gathered around her a band of twelve maidens all actuated like herself by the idea of the systematic religious education of the rising generation as the best, nay, only hope of preserving, amidst the demoralization caused by the Franco-German-Italian conflict, that ideal of Christian family life without which the advent of paganism is never very far off.<sup>1</sup>

The names of "the first twelve maidens" of the future Ursuline Order were: Simona Borni, Catherine and Dominica Dolce, Dorosilla Zinelli, Pelligrina Casali, Clara Gaffuri, Paula and Laura Peschieri, Barbara Fontana, Clara Martinengo, Margaret dell 'Olmo and Maria Bartolletti. A pious widow of noble rank, Elizabeth Prato, gave the community a hall in one of her houses in the Plaza del Duomo of Brescia, for the training of their rapidly growing numbers in piety and the works of education and charity. The sisterhood attended the Church of St Afra, a building full of the relics of the martyrs and rich in memories of devotion and self-sacrifice. Finally, on 25th November, 1535, the Feast of St Catharine, the Virgin-Philosopher and Martyr of Alexandria, the solemn canonical institution of the company of St Ursula took place in the Oratory of the Plaza del Duomo, "in the presence of the proper authorities and their invited friends." The chief of these "proper authorities" was, of course, Cardinal Cornaro, Bishop of Brescia. Twenty-eight took the vows by which they bound themselves to the Company and to each other. The new institute was called by the Foundress "the Company of St Ursula," because ever since her martyrdom and that of her maiden band by the Huns at Cologne (A.D. 383 ?), the famous British Princess, St Ursula, has

a casualty which really proved to be a great calamity to the Romans, since it removed the only man who was capable of restraining the dreadful horde of international villains whose outrages and orgies were to "stagger humanity!"

<sup>1</sup> This idea of solid religious education as a cure for social ills, was also that of Henry VI, when founding Eton College—"The College of the Blessed Mary of Eton beside Windsor," 1440. The holy King intended the place to become a nursery of saintly prelates, wise statesmen and worthy men of the world, whose influence would gradually save this country from the menace of the fierce feudal aristocracy whose only method of solving political problems was by the sword. The terrible Wars of The Roses, which commenced fifteen years later, show how well grounded were the fears of the pious King!

been generally regarded as the ideal type of Christian virginity.<sup>1</sup> St Ursula was early chosen by the authorities of the Sorbonne as the protectress of professors and students, and the *cultus* of the holy Martyr was, or rather is, widespread over Germany, France, and the north of Italy.<sup>2</sup>

The "Company of St Ursula" was, of course, not "an Order" in the ecclesiastical sense. That distinction was not to come till 1612. The members were not even enclosed, nor bound by the vow of chastity. It was simply a pious sisterhood of devout women living in the world, who bound themselves to sanctify their own lives, instruct young girls, and nurse the sick. The members were to hear Mass daily, communicate every Friday, and on the last Sunday of the month to assemble in the Oratory to hear the Rule read. A plain dress of dark material, with a cloak for rainy weather, was adopted, though the present habit, which is black and similar to that of most other Nuns, but distinguished by a leathern girdle, was not introduced till much later.

From the first the Ursulines increased rapidly. St Charles established them at Milan in 1568. In France—where the Society had been introduced since 1594—the Institute was raised to the status of an Order, strictly enclosed and under solemn vows, through the exertions of the pious Madame de St Beuve, who obtained a Bull from Paul V for that purpose. A branch of the French Order was settled in Canada, 1639, when the first Convent was built at Quebec. The body of the heroic Marquis de Montcalm, the opponent of the British hero, General Wolfe (1759), lies buried in the Chapel. The Irish Ursuline Convent was established at Cork by the famous Miss Nano Nagle, a kinswoman of the illustrious Edmund Burke, 1771, and in addition to the very many houses of St Angela's holy Foundation, to be found in every part of the world, there are some fifteen convents of the same in the United Kingdom, all successfully engaged in the principal work designed by the holy Foundress—the education of girls.

Pope Paul III in 1544, confirmed the "Company of St Ursula" as instituted by Angela, but by that time the holy Foundress had passed to her eternal reward. As early as 1532, she had chosen the place of her burial in the Church of St Afra, and when seized with what was to be her last illness she assured her sorrowing sisters and friends that her end was at hand. Having received the last rites with extraordinary devotion, and given her final instructions to the Community, she caused herself to be clothed in the habit of the Third Order of St Francis, and in that

<sup>1</sup> The exact date of St Ursula's martyrdom is unknown. The years stated vary from A.D. 238 to 451. The date assigned in the text, 383, is the one generally given in most accounts of the Saint.

<sup>2</sup> In 1490, a female orphanage was opened at Venice under the patronage of St Ursula.

venerated garb she calmly expired at about six o'clock on Tuesday, 27th January, 1540. A marble sepulchre, probably the work of Moretto and his pupils, long enshrined the sacred remains of Angela Merici, in the crypt of St Afra's, until 1777, when another and more beautiful tomb of marble and gilt bronze received the body of the holy Foundress. The conspicuous virtues and many miracles of this wonderful woman having been carefully investigated over a period of many years, Pope Clement XIII, on 30th April, 1768, decreed her Beatification. In a decree, dated 16th July, 1777, Pope Pius VI declared the virtues practised by the *Beata* to have been "heroic each in its kind." Finally, on 24th May, 1807, Pius VII, accorded her the supreme honours of Canonization, together with St Coletta, the reformer of the French Poor Clares, St Hyacinth Mariscotti of Viterbo, St Francis Caracciolo (†1603), and St Benedict of San Philadelphia, "the light of Sicily" (†1589). Apart from her work for the Catholic world at large, St Angela must be regarded as one of the eminent preservers of the Faith in the North of Italy. In the year of her death, 1540, it was estimated that at least half the town of Brescia was Lutheran or Calvinist, and that of the other half many were disposed to heresy! The insane Franco-Imperialist wars already mentioned, had not only undermined religion and morals, but had introduced into the country great numbers of "reformers" from Germany and Switzerland, whose emissaries—often disguised as priests and friars—were busy assailing the religion of the simple and ignorant. The schools of the Ursulines did their share in strengthening and extending Catholicism and in safeguarding the homeland of the Church from that welter of heretical confusion which not only largely originated, but which so powerfully aids that unlovely thing—"modern unbelief!"

[*St Angela Merici and the Ursulines*, by the Rev. Bernard O'Reilly (London: Burns & Oates, 1880), is a very full biography, but its usefulness is somewhat impaired by its extreme discursiveness. A detailed *Life* in Italian, by the Abate Salvatori, appeared at Rome, 1807, the year of the Canonization.]

MAY 31

POSSENTI, ST GABRIEL (ST GABRIEL OF OUR LADY OF  
SORROWS), PASSIONIST  
(1838-1862)

THERE appears to be a very general impression abroad that the Saints of God are from their birth a sort of race apart, a set of beings of different mould from the rest of men and, therefore, capable of efforts and ideals quite beyond the reach of the common herd! No doubt, the phrase,



"*a cunabulis sanctus*"—holy from his cradle, to be read here and there in the lives of Saints commemorated in the Breviary, lends some colour to this popular notion, but it may be said here that such a conception of the nature of a Saint is entirely incorrect. The greatest Saints were all flesh-and-blood mortals like ourselves. Many of them, in fact, had surroundings and conditions differing in nowise essentially from those of most people of to-day, and numbers, too, of the Saints were not only, at one time, "full of faults and imperfections"—as many humble old penitents tell their Father Confessors month by month—but were long literally wedded to the world, and, even for years before the great change in their lives, saturated with sin!

Among the many names of those now honoured by the Church, who were once very much of the world, though happily not greatly besmirched by it, was Gabriel Possenti, who, in a short life of less than twenty-four years, filled up a full measure of marvellous sanctity. He was one of several children of Signor Sante Possenti and Agnes Frisciotti, his wife, and was born at Assisi, 1st March, 1838. He was baptized the same day and at the very font where the great Founder of the Seraphic Order had been made a child of the Church six centuries before. The name Francis was a further link with the historic Saint of the place. The father of the young Possenti was in the Government service of the Holy See, and had for many years been prefect of various cities in the Papal States. When Francis was about four years old, Signor Possenti, asked for a less arduous position that he might be able to devote his time more to the affairs of his own family. Pope Gregory XVI granted this request, and appointed the faithful official, Assessor of Spoleto. Not long after moving to that city, Signor Possenti had the misfortune to lose his excellent wife. To supply her place—as far as such a place can be supplied—the ex-governor placed an elderly lady over his household as housekeeper and governess. Signor Possenti himself lost no opportunity of setting an example of rare virtue to his family, and among the excellent customs of the house was the now, alas! almost extinct practice of family prayers daily. This included the rosary, and from this latter consoling devotion the young Francis Possenti no doubt acquired much of his tender affection to the Holy Mother of God. Among the other "good deeds" inculcated on his children by the devout Assessor of Spoleto, was that of kindness to the poor. "Papa wishes us to be good to the poor," little Francis would often say, adding with precocious anticipation, "who knows what may happen to ourselves some day!" He would often give away dainties intended for himself, and in other ways practised the virtue of mortification and active charity. But apart from this and the usual observance of the ordinary religious duties and practices of piety, the young Possenti un-

doubtedly had his "faults and imperfections!" Gusts of violent passion, fits of insubordination, and a jarring habit of severely criticizing the shortcomings of others, were serious defects that certainly did not give promise either of religious vocation or future sanctity. Yet these "storms" were always followed by great remorse and perfervid promises of amendment.

The early education of Francis was received at the schools of the Christian Brothers at Spoleto, after which he entered the Jesuit College in the same town. He proved to be a brilliant student, and each year his name figured high among the prize awards and on the pass-lists at the examinations. His graceful appearance and winning manners made him very popular both with the professors and his fellow-students, but as he advanced in his teens, he manifested an over-keen relish for fashionable attire and the diversions of society life. He dressed not merely in the latest mode, but sometimes even, as people say, a little beyond it—used habitually a quantity of scent and parted his hair "with meticulous care!" Count d'Orsay, "the last of the dandies!" had probably been dead a year or two before his latest and unknown disciple began to pose as a local *arbitrator elegantiarum*, but the spirit of the illustrious artist and man of fashion was faithfully reproduced in his young imitator. Drawing-room parties, theatricals, society gossip, and above all dancing, were now as serious objects in life to Francis as the classical and philosophy course at the Jesuit College, and, in fact, the last of these diversions—that devoted to Terpsichore—became "a perfect mania" with him. He was nick-named "Il balerino"—the dancer—in addition to his other sobriquet, "Il damerino"—the dandy! Yet he was not guilty of any great fault, and, wonderful to say, his practices of devotion were not relaxed. The rosary was said daily as before, and the *Pieta* at home still had its constant tribute of flowers from "the swell" of Spoleto! Perhaps all during this critical time, such heavenly patrons as St Francis of Sales—who in his youth had also worn fine clothes and even showed himself a past-master of the sword—as some of the bravoës of Paris once found to their cost!—and St Augustine of Hippo, who always ate by preference with a silver spoon, were praying for the young exquisite, but, at any rate, when in his eighteenth year, illness and bereavement—much as in the case of John Henry Newman—began to bring Francis Possenti to his senses! The first sickness carried the young society butterfly to death's door! Though he had done nothing specially reprehensible, the valley of the shadow made him promise an amendment of life even to the embracing of a cloistered one in a religious institute. He recovered and broke his resolution! Another illness in which, as he believed, health was restored through the intercession of Blessed Andrew Bobola, accompanied by similar resolutions, also passed without any of these promises being fulfilled. The death

of a favourite sister, Mary, in June, 1855, was the last and painfully dramatic reminder of the transience of human things. Meanwhile, Francis seems to have added to his society ambitions those of the hunting-field. He became an excellent, nay a daring, rider, and in taking a dangerous fence on one occasion, was badly thrown, thereby sustaining severe injuries. Another time, when out with the guns, his own fowling-piece went off by accident and nearly killed him on the spot! These repeated warnings, and his own broken promises, began to make a deep impression on Francis. He wisely took his excellent father into his confidence, but, naturally, Signor Possenti did not receive these communications at all seriously, coming as they did from a "dear boy," who up to now had shown such a decided preference for the light themes of Horace rather than the reverend philosophy of Virgil! So he met the austere suggestions anent the cowl, by proposing to his son as an alternative an advantageous marriage with a "charming girl" of good family, and so for the time the "world" again triumphed, and Francis pursued once more his society course.

There had long been celebrated at Spoleto a remarkable *Icon* of Our Lady, presented, it is said, to the city about the middle of the twelfth century by Frederick Barbarossa. If so, this gift must have been made before 1155, for, in the year named, the terrible "Red-beard" Emperor destroyed the place for seizing his ambassador and sending him as prisoner to Apulia. Be this as it may, the procession is (or was) a great local festival and day of devotion. Among those who took part in it, on 22nd August, 1856, was Francis. As the venerable representation of the Holy Mother of God was being borne past him, he seemed to hear the words: "Francis, it is useless to resist! Thou art not made for the world! Come! Religion awaits thee!" Instantly came, at least interiorly, the reply: "Mother mine, thou hast conquered! I leave myself in thy most holy hands!"

Two weeks yet remained before the end of the term which was to be Francis's last at school prior to entering upon his career, religious or otherwise. He had done well at the examinations, as usual, and could contemplate the "speech-day," with its official and society visitors with perfect equanimity. In fact, as heretofore, the scholastic honours were largely his, but none of the high personages present at the function, besides his father, suspected that the splendidly dressed, highly favoured, and radiant-looking youth who carried off so many prizes for philosophy, classics, etc., was actually then wearing beneath his fine apparel a rough hair-shirt, or that he was on the eve of "leaving all things" to serve God more perfectly in the solitude of the cloister.

Next day—the morrow of that greatest of all triumphs, a school triumph—saw Francis on the way to the Passionist Novitiate at Morrovale

in the Marches of Ancona. He broke his journey to visit several relatives whose remonstrances and even ridicule he met with good-humoured firmness, and the assurance that all they had to say about the step he was taking, had already been weighed by him in the balance and—found wanting!

It was on Sunday, 21st September, 1856, that Francis Possenti was clothed with the habit of the Passionist Congregation, taking on this occasion the name of Gabriel of Our Lady of Sorrows. With his entrance into the holy Foundation of St Paul of the Cross, Brother Gabriel cast away for ever the things of the world, and embraced in all its severity the life of fervour and penance that was to raise him to such heights of sanctity. Shortly after his reception, he wrote to his father: "I would not exchange a quarter of an hour at the feet of Our Lady of Compassion, most Holy Mary, for a year or for endless years among the pleasures and pageants of the world!" He never verbally alluded to the glittering trivialities that had once afforded him so much satisfaction, but in several of his letters to his father and friends, he bewailed the precious hours wasted on pastimes and occupations which now seemed as so much dross!

Ordinary persons are generally bewildered by the subject of "Mortification," and often ask, in a sort of impatient surprise, the meaning of it all! Are not the rational pleasures of life, its normal gaieties and amusements perfectly lawful, they say, then why condemn such pursuits, or at least why regard them as things to be avoided? The answer is that such diversions are not in the least condemned. In fact, they are not only lawful, but they are even to be highly recommended within their sphere. The Catholic Church which abhors gloom as not one of the least enemies of the soul, would have her children be always glad. "Gaudete in Domino semper: iterum dico gaudete," she eternally voices with St Paul, and so all reasonable games, sports and amusements are part of her repertory of desirable natural happiness. But being the mystical body of Christ, she bears ever on her and before her, the wounds of the Crucified, and she never lets any of her children forget that they are ransomed at a great price! Hence, none of her members can forego to give up the Cross. Willingly or unwillingly, this burden—joyous or wearisome, according as we make it—must be borne. Heroic and generous souls, not to be outdone in this following of Our Lord—this taking up of the Cross—seek, like St Paul, to crucify their bodies with the further severities of mortification, not merely for their own sins and imperfections, but as an act of vicarious suffering, to draw down God's mercy on sinners, just as the fasting and prayers of Moses for forty days, obtained pardon for the idolatrous people of Israel.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Exodus xxxiv. 28.

From the first, Brother Gabriel was diligent in the pursuit of personal austerity, but if, like the great Doctor of the Gentiles, he chastised his body and brought it into subjection, his austerities were carefully mitigated by his Superiors. Being naturally very delicate, he was forbidden to wear a hair-shirt, pointed chains, or any of the traditional instruments of penance. "Wear the hair-shirt by all means," he was once told, half in jest and half in earnest, "but wear it outside your habit, so that we may all see what a holy man you are!"

Besides his love of suffering for Christ's sake, Brother Gabriel was at all times, "instant in prayer." All occasions not given to duty, recreation or other obligations, were "ever towards the Lord" (*Cant.* iv. 6), so that his life seemed to be one long act of supplication to God.

About the beginning of 1858, Brother Gabriel was sent to Pievetorina to do a further year's study of philosophy as preparatory to beginning his divinity course at Isola. While reading theology, he adopted the plan suggested long before by another holy Passionist, the Venerable Vincent Strambi, as an aid to study, *i.e.*, imagining one's self surrounded by a crowd of persons hungering for the Holy Eucharist and the other truths and ordinances of the Gospel!

He made rapid progress in his treatises and on 25th May was admitted to the tonsure. He would have received the various orders up to that of the diaconate within a year afterwards, had not the Garibaldian revolutionary movements at this time made the holding of ordinations very difficult.

The health of Brother Gabriel, as before remarked, had never been very robust, but from this time a marked change for the worse set in, and by September, 1861, it was evident that consumption was already far advanced. All the great traits that had so marked the last years of this short but wonderfully holy life, were now intensified—the marvellous spirit of prayer, of devotion to Our Lady, of love of the Cross, and all that that love implies. As with the last bright flicker of a lamp before its extinction, the closing days of Brother Gabriel's career were illumined with the light of a wondrous example and of devotion intensified. He received the last rites of the Church, 18th February, 1862, and nine days later—days filled with passing shadows and temptations, but relieved also by celestial consolations—he passed from the vale of shades and shadows to his true and eternal home. The body of Brother Gabriel was interred in the cemetery of the Monastery at Isola, which in 1862 became a barracks for some of the regiments of "United Italy." Meanwhile, the fame of the holy young Passionist spread far and wide, and the place of his sepulture became a noted and constant centre of pilgrimage. His reputation as a marvellous intercessor and wonder-worker went throughout the

Catholic world, and ere long, the report of miracle after miracle wrought through his intercession, corroborated the general belief in his sanctity. At length, in response to a general petition signed by many Cardinals, Archbishops, Bishops and Superiors-General, Leo XIII, on 7th July, 1896, signed the decree for his cause to be introduced. The decree of Urban VIII ordering fifty years to elapse between death and Beatification was dispensed by Pope Leo's successor, Pius X, and the decree beatifying the Blessed Gabriel was officially published on 31st May, 1908. Among the vast crowds present at St Peter's on this impressive occasion was one of the Blessed Gabriel's own brothers, Michael, also F. Norbert, C.P., once his confessor, and a Signor Dominico Tiberi, who had been miraculously cured through his intercession.<sup>1</sup> Twelve years later, the crowning honour of Canonization was witnessed at St Peter's on 13th May, 1920, and in the decree solemnly enrolling the Blessed Gabriel among the Saints, Pope Benedict XV declared the youthful, but already long famous light of the Passionate Congregation, the patron of youth and especially of young Religious throughout the world. That patronage will surely be always efficacious, if those who seek it try to imitate their holy example by a love of what he ever practised to such an eminent degree—the spirit of self-denial, prayer, and a tender devotion to Our Lord's Most Blessed Mother.

[*St Gabriel of Our Lady of Sorrows, Passionist Student*, by the Rev. Joseph Smith, C.P. (Catholic Truth Society of Ireland). A concise, but admirable, account. *A Life of the Blessed Gabriele*, by the Rev. Hyacinth Hage, C.P., was published in U.S.A., 1899. Many of the details of St Gabriel's later life are derived from the recollections of his college friend and companion, Bonaccia. These accounts were first published in 1868, and they have since been reprinted several times.]

JUNE 1

STOREY, JOHN THE BLESSED, MARTYR

(1504-1571)

EVEN if John Storey, D.C.L., Chancellor of the Dioceses of London and Oxford under Queen Mary I, had been the very sinister person described by Foxe, he would certainly have won the at least, negative praise of Macaulay, for he was—unlike Cranmer—quite prepared eventually to suffer himself what he had, according to the Protestant martyrologist, so often caused

<sup>1</sup> Signor Michael Possenti was also present at his brother's Canonization.

others to endure. For the rest, Dr Storey rather seems to us to have been a man born out of due time. Two and a half centuries later he would have been in all probability one of the pillars of Doctors' Commons, have edited most likely the Reports of that learned body, and died highly esteemed for worth and erudition as Dean of the Arches, etc.

But the John Storey of history fell, indeed, on evil days. The son of Nicholas Storey and Joan his wife, he belonged to a good old Durham stock, one of the great northern families that fill the pages of Surtees. Going somewhat late to Oxford, that is, if he was actually born in 1504, he studied at Hincksey Hall and there took his B.C.L. in May, 1531, and six years later became Principal of Broadgates Hall, long since developed into Pembroke College. Mr Storey soon became "the most noted civilian and canonist of his time." These civilians and canonists, of course, intended to practise as advocates in the Ecclesiastical Courts attached at that time to every diocese, for apart from the Canon Law, all matters relating to wills and marriages were determined in these "Courts Christian."<sup>1</sup> The very year of the schism of the nation from the Apostolic See (1534), Henry, as part of his anti-church policy, abolished the Canon Law lectures at both Universities, but as some kind of compensation, established in 1537 the Regius Professorship of Civil Law at Oxford, and Mr Storey was appointed the first Lecturer. He resigned this post in 1539, when he was admitted as Advocate at Doctors' Commons. During the siege of Boulogne, 1544—that short-lived act of hostility against Francis I, which gave rise to the humorous name of the "Bull and Mouth" Inn, London, Dr Storey—a D.C.L. since 1538—served with the English Army in France as Judge Advocate-General, and to such satisfaction, that he was confirmed in his office of Regius Professor of Law at Oxford for life. Up to this time Storey had gone with the tide, taking the Oath of Supremacy and showing himself in everything the King's man. But the accession of the boy-

<sup>1</sup> The sole Advocates in the Ecclesiastical Courts were those who had taken the degree of Doctor of Laws in either University, and been duly admitted to the Bar of these Courts by *Fiat* of the Archbishop of Canterbury, after a year of "silence" on the part of the candidates, during which time they were supposed to acquaint themselves with the routine of their profession.

Doctors wore scarlet robes when in Court, those of Oxford being lined with taffety. The Cambridge gowns were set off with white minever. Caps of black velvet completed the official dress. In 1568, Dr Henry Harvey, Dean of the Arches, purchased a general meeting-house for the Advocates which, after the Great Fire, was rebuilt on the present site. The Society was incorporated, 1768. After the passing of the Probate, Divorce and Admiralty Act, 1857, nearly all the ecclesiastical litigation was transferred to the new division, whereupon the Doctors surrendered their Charter of Incorporation to the Crown, and were admitted to the General Bar by Statute, as if they had been regularly "called" at one of the Inns of Court. Besides the Advocates, the Ecclesiastical Courts had their Proctors or Solicitors. These were admitted after seven years of apprenticeship under articles to one of the thirty-four Senior Proctors. The application-form for admission had to be signed by three Advocates and three Proctors, whereupon the Archbishop issued his *Fiat* to the Dean of Arches to admit the applicant. When in Court, the Proctors wore black gowns.

King, Edward VI, and the rapid exchange of the "Catholic" policy of Henry VIII for the open and uncompromising Protestantism of Cranmer, Hertford and the rest, seems to have opened the eyes of the great civilian, as it undoubtedly did those of Gardiner. Besides, the "pure Gospel"—as the fanatical, but by no means disinterested, Lords and Members of Parliament termed the Zwinglian-Calvinistic doctrines now imported wholesale from Germany and Switzerland—stood for much more than intense enmity to Rome. The abbey and priories were, indeed, gone, but there were still splendid "pickings" in the shape of Church plate and ornaments, richly adorned tombs, and the like; also endowments for the support of services and churches. Longing eyes were cast upon all these things by the parliamentary "reformers," and hence the feverish haste to Protestantize the realm by bringing in foreign sectaries—John à Lasco, Peter Martyr, John of Ulm, Ochino, and in the wake of these more or less historic names, a perfect swarm of sectaries, many of them of the worst description. When the First Book of Common Prayer was introduced (1549), Storey, now Member for Hendon, Wilts, spoke against it with a vigour that had not been heard in the English Divan for nearly a century! The burden of this bold discourse was: "Woe to the land, whose King is a child!" (*Eccles.* x. 16), and, of course, its speaker was committed to prison, so completely had the Commons forgotten in that age of Oriental despotism in Britain their own fundamental right to "freedom of speech!"<sup>1</sup> He made his submission after months of imprisonment, after which he is reported to have gone to the (West?) country and spent much time there in exhorting the people to resist further ecclesiastical "reformation," which all honest men now knew only meant robbery of the basest kind for the benefit of the greedy courtiers and their parasites who rioted on the spoils of the Church. To save himself from further penalties for this patriotic act, Storey retired to Flanders. At Louvain, where he formed one of a large band of English exiles for religion, he spent much time with the Carthusian Fathers, joining in their devotions and identifying himself as far as he could with their severe mode of life. That he did not enter the Order was, of course, owing to the fact that he was by this time married, and had a young wife and family in England. At the accession of Queen Mary, Storey returned home. His Professorship was restored and his known learning in the Civil and Canon Law led to his promotion to the Chancellorship of the Dioceses of London and Oxford. The bishops, as is now generally known, did not advise the re-enactment of the *de Haereticis comburendo* Statute (2 Hen. IV, c. 15), which was so soon to light the fires of the Marian Persecution all over the south and east of England.

<sup>1</sup> As recently as 1512, the famous Strode's Act, (4 Hen. VIII, c. 8) declared all proceedings for words spoken in Parliament, *void*.



That fatal measure was the work of the Privy Council largely made up of laymen.<sup>1</sup> It is well known too that Cranmer in the last year of Edward's reign was preparing a Bill to consign Catholics to the flames, and no doubt the revived Act was by way of retaliation. It was also largely pushed forward by the conduct of the ultra-protestant party in London. For not only were the Catholic doctrines and rites openly derided and denounced by the dissentient ministers and congregations, but the clergy and parish churches were in many cases attacked by parties of armed brawlers. Such demonstrations against the party in power would be dangerous even in these indifferent days, but amidst the hard, uncompromising belief of Tudor England, they spelt, as a rule, destruction for all concerned.

As Diocesan Chancellor, Storey was called upon to play a leading part in the unhappy heresy prosecutions, and he soon became as odious to the "Godly" of Mary's reign, as did Sir George Mackenzie—"the bloudie Advocate"—more than a century later to the "Saints" of the Scottish Covenant. But if it fell to his lot to assist in administering the law as it stood, he certainly did his best to mitigate its infliction. With Abbot Feckenham of Westminster, he once successfully begged off twenty-eight poor people condemned to the stake, and on another occasion advised the punishment of the few instead of the many. He no doubt recognized that those who so heroically faced the flames for the multifarious doctrinal confusion vaguely known as "the Principles of the Reformation," were, after all, the honest, if misguided, section which had gained no material advantage from the late changes in religion. Such persons, therefore, stood in very favourable contrast to the selfish, cynical horde of titled place-hunters who, having grasped riches, rank and retinue as the price of apostasy under Henry and Edward, were now going to Mass, and even applauding the repressive measures of the Court! This appears all the more plain when we consider Storey's conduct at the accession of Elizabeth. As member for Downton, he resolutely spoke against the Supremacy Bill, and deplored not having caused the late prosecutions for heresy to be directed rather against the great and powerful than the mere rank and file—the "great branches," not "the little twigs and shoots." In May, 1560, he was in the Fleet Prison, where very high charges were demanded for the ordinary decencies of life—beds being let at £1 a week or £12 in present currency. He is said to have escaped, for about 1562 he was again seized in the west of England and committed to the Marshalsea. He again got away by scaling a wall after the style of Jack Sheppard (c. 1724), and by means of assistance from the Chaplain of the Spanish Ambassador, De la Quadra, passed safely over to Louvain. Here he was

<sup>1</sup> Reeves: *History of English Law*, vol. iii., p. 514, note. (F. W. Finlayson's edition.)

joined later by his wife and family, and being without means, received a pension of a hundred florins from King Philip, who as the former King-Consort of Queen Mary, appointed Storey his agent in the distribution of various small grants allotted for the relief of the growing body of English Refugees in the Spanish Netherlands.

King Philip had recently caused to be set up at Antwerp, a Commission for preventing the entrance of heretical books into the country. He gave the office of Searcher to one, William Parker, brother of Elizabeth's Archbishop, and a pretended Convert to Catholicism. As a spy of Cecil's, Parker entered into a plot to get Storey into the power of the Government at home, which had never forgiven the latter's Catholic activities and speeches. It was arranged that Storey, who had been appointed Parker's Assistant, should go on board a vessel belonging to a certain Cornelius Van Eyck, to search for alleged anti-catholic literature, which was accordingly done, whereupon Cecil's agents on board, Ramsden, Bragge and Jewkes, seized their prey and the vessel sailed for Yarmouth. After confinement in the Lollards' Tower—not the famous prison-turret of Lambeth Palace, but another of the same name at the south side of St Paul's—Storey was removed to the Tower, where he was barbarously racked to extort from him something that might serve for an indictment of treason, as clearly his previous acts could not even in those days be construed into such an offence. At last, his friendship abroad with the Norton family, lately so deeply implicated in the "Rising of the North," was held to amount to "consorting with the Queen's enemies," and it sufficed for his trial at Westminster Hall, 26th May, 1571. He boldly refused to plead, declaring that he was a naturalized subject of the King of Spain, and as Abraham had fled from Chaldea to avoid idolatry, so he like many others had abjured the realm to escape the heresy now being promulgated in the land. In a letter to his wife two days after the inevitable sentence to the horrible death for treason had been passed, Storey defended his not having pleaded on the ground that had he done so, he would have acknowledged thereby the right of a Queen who lay under a sentence of excommunication, and that so far from fearing death, he rejoiced in it. It is not much to the credit of Philip that political considerations prevented him from making more than a feeble protest against this audacious kidnapping of a naturalized subject from one of his own ports. The phrase, "Singeing the King of Spain's beard" had not then been invented, but the beard in question had been pretty badly singed all the same, and no doubt a really firm diplomatic note such as the one from Lord John Russell's Cabinet, which nearer our own time effected the release of Messrs Slidell and Mason from the clutches of the Northern Government of the United States, would have made even the Burleigh-

Walsingham ministry hand over their victim.<sup>1</sup> But none was forthcoming, and on 1st June, 1571, the Blessed John Storey was done to death at Tyburn under circumstances of barbarity which outdid even the inhuman modes of execution current in these days! The horrors of the disembowelling and quartering were purposely protracted and the slaughter of this old man of nearly seventy caused the utmost indignation on the Continent, and made people say that the island heretics were capable of any atrocity!

He made a long, calm and fearless speech to the crowds assembled around the place of execution, repudiating all charges of treason with reference to the Queen, and reminded the spectators that during the late proceedings for heresy, he, Cardinal Pole, and Abbot Feckenham had saved nearly thirty persons from being burned, and that when a number of suspected heretics had been entrusted to his custody, he gave them the same entertainment as he and his family had. Finally, and he cited the entries in the official registers to prove this, he had succeeded in persuading the authorities of that day not to burn any more persons in London. He concluded by saying that as the Ark of Noah is the figure of Christ's Church, so he had continued in the Ship of Christ of which the Apostle Peter is the Guide and Principal.

The portrait of Dr Storey figured among the pictures of the English Martyrs which Gregory XIII caused to be painted for the English College, Rome, and his memory was greatly venerated throughout the Catholic world, notably at Louvain and in the Carthusian Order. He was beatified by Leo XIII, 29th December, 1886.

## JUNE 2

### MARIA ANNA DE PAREDES, THE BLESSED

(1618-1645)

THE year after St Rose of Lima—the first Canonized Saint of the American Continent—closed her wonderful career of prayer and amazing mortifications, a child was born in the city of Quito, Ecuador, who was to follow

<sup>1</sup> On 8th November, 1861, the U.S.A. War Steamer *San Jacinto*, held up on the high seas near Cuba, the British Mail Steamer *Trent*, and forcibly took prisoners Messrs Slidell and Mason, Commissioners for the Confederate States, who were on board. The Russell Cabinet, through the British Ambassador at Washington, Lord Lyons, at once demanded the release of the Commissioners, and the Note embodying this had the full support of all the Great Powers. Eventually President Lincoln and his Government admitted the justice of the British case, and the Commissioners were released, though not till war between the two countries had become something more than a "possibility!" The peaceful end of the crisis was greatly furthered by that able statesman, the Prince Consort, who caused the Note to Washington to be so drawn up as not to wound American susceptibilities.

closely in the footsteps of her prototype. The father of Mary Anna de Paredes was Don Girolamo Flores de Paredes, who had apparently emigrated to South America from Toledo. His wife, Donna Mariana Cranobles de Xaramilo, was also of high Spanish lineage. Such noble settlers or officials as these formed the governing class throughout South America during the whole of the rule of those vast dominions under the Kings of Spain, and perhaps the comparatively uneventful history of that widespread meridional Continent for nearly three centuries is the best commentary on a regime that seems to get little praise from historians. Certainly, peace and content, much trade, and freedom from political unrest, which so long prevailed from the Isthmus of Panama to Valparaiso, are to be preferred any day to revolutions of unscrupulous political adventurers and their shibboleths enforced by those gentle persuasives, the dagger and revolver! When Mary de Paredes was born, Quito differed very little, if at all, from any of the towns in Old Spain. The social, political and religious atmosphere in which she grew up was that which had surrounded St Teresa. She was the child of election, and while other little girls were thinking of dolls, she was already bent on a life of mortification! She had an extraordinary devotion to Our Lady of the traditional Iberian type, and at the age of ten, made the three solemn vows of religious life—vows which she faithfully kept till her death. Just as St Teresa and her little brother wished to go and give their young lives for the Faith among the Moors, so, when the news arrived at Quito of the martyrdoms of the Christians in Japan, tragedies which were of frequent occurrence all during the childhood of Maria de Paredes, the youthful enthusiast made a determined if puerile effort to go and join those heroes and heroines who were renewing in the Japanese Empire the glorious constancy and stimulating example of the faithful in the days of the Catacombs. Unable to carry out her project, she resolved to commence her life of bloodless martyrdom at home. Like St Rose she became with the consent of her parents an anchoress, constructing for herself a cell in her own garden, and practising there the austerities associated with the history of some of the most mortified of the early solitaries of Egypt. She wore a crown of thorns on her head, and a rough hair-shirt next to her skin. Several times both day and night she took the discipline, even to blood. The short time allotted to rest, if such it can be called, the holy recluse tormented her body by reposing on a pallet of thorns and nettles! No doubt, in all these frightful austerities, something national and temperamental enters—the same ardour is seen in the sanctity of Saints of southern extraction as is witnessed at the other end in the violent excesses of political parties and individual enthusiasts generally, belonging to the same race. Then due regard must be had for the intensity of knowledge

of divine things existing in the minds of all holy persons. The mortifications of St Paul, though he was the humblest of men, could lead him to exclaim: "With Christ I am nailed to the Cross!" He had seen the vision, heard "the secret words" and been "wrapped to the Seventh Heaven," and of all men knew best the depths of meaning of the divine admonition: "You are redeemed at a great price!" Joined to these manifestations of self-immolation, Mary de Paredes added the further trial of fasting. An ounce of bread or less sufficed her for a week, but daily she nourished her soul with the most holy Sacrament of the Altar. She is one of the band of Saints for whom this divine food was enough both for time and eternity. Meantime, though a recluse, she thought constantly of souls and their spiritual welfare, and not only were her prayers offered continually for the conversion of sinners, but she personally influenced for good numbers of the wayward of both sexes who came to her for counsel on the only thing that really matters. She had received from God a marvellous insight into hearts, and over and above that, she had, like the Blessed Anna Maria Taigi, the gift of discerning secret things and of foretelling future events. At her word, numbers turned from their wanton lives, became reconciled to God and the Church, and set seriously about the all-important work of their eternal salvation. To the grace of interior perception was added the gift of working miracles. By the sign of the Cross or the sprinkling of holy water, she cured mortal diseases, and even on one occasion it is recorded raised a dead woman to life. These wonders continued until the day of her own death, 26th May, 1645, when God was pleased to mark the exalted holiness of this virgin thaumaturge by causing a pure lily to spring up from her blood—a prodigy which has given to Maria de Paredes the poetic title of the "Lily of Quito."

A local *cultus* began almost at once to this marvellous maid, who, though but twenty-seven at the time of her death, had in that short space fulfilled years of sanctity and left her country spiritually the richer for having lived in it. But it was not till nearly a century after her decease that active steps began to be taken to secure her Canonization. The document containing the written proofs of her heroic virtues and many miracles was sent to Rome in 1754, and this attestation, it may be remarked, was mainly the work of the zealous and diligent Mgr. Alfonso della Pegna, Bishop of Quito. Benedict XIV signed the Commission for introducing the Cause, 17th December, 1757. Though Pius VI, before his exile, ordered the publication of the decree proving the heroic virtues of the "Lily of Quito," the subsequent confusion caused by the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars and the unsettled political state of Europe after the conclusion of these (1815), shelved apparently, the question till the accession of Pius IX. Then through the mediation of Father John

P. Roothaan, the famous General of the Jesuits, the matter was again brought prominently forward, and the cause of Beatification was proceeded with. Finally, on 10th November, 1853, Pius IX solemnly enrolled Mary Anna de Paredes among the *Beatae* of holy Church. As war and revolution had played their part in retarding this happy consummation, so the plots and disorders in Ecuador which went on almost uninterruptedly from 1830 to 1869 in that unhappy country, appear to have again prevented steps being taken to ensure the Canonization of the wonderful Saint of Quito. But this glorious end has at length crowned the work. The long-dead Maiden of Quito was enrolled among the Saints by Pius XII on 9th July, 1950, an act which emphasized yet again that sanctity is immortal and that it shines like a resplendent sun over the vicissitudes of the world. The holy example and memory of St M. de Parades seem to have done much in the spiritual way for her country, and Ecuador still remains the most practically Catholic of the several States of South America.

[Roman Breviary Summer Section gives a very good sketch of the *Beata* under June 2, supplement. *Tablet*, Nov.-Dec. 1853.]

## JUNE 4

## CARACCILO, ST FRANCIS, CONFESSOR

(1563?-1608)

ST FRANCIS CARACCILO as a boy was one of those children whom "the world" sets down as "unnatural." No doubt we ourselves also had we seen the little Ascanio, by which name he was baptized, eschewing games and "the things of a child," to make constant visits to the Blessed Sacrament and give food and other reliefs to the poor, would have thought it all very "odd," did we not reflect that the "supernatural" does strange things at times and manifests itself in old and young alike, regardless of what people may say or even do! Ascanius, or as we must call him by his name in religion, Francis, Caracciolo, was born at Villa Santa Maria in that quarter of Italy known as the Abruzzi, the very name of which always recalls mental pictures of wild and lonely scenery and picturesque groups of Salvator Rosa-esque brigands! The family of the Saint was noble, being a junior branch of the ancient house. While still a youth, he was attacked by one of the several skin complaints collectively described as "leprosy" in those days, but which in the case of the subject of this memoir was

made the means of still further withdrawing him from things of earth and towards those of Heaven. He was cured in consequence, it is said, of a vow to devote his life to the service of God, and with this end in view he went, at the age of about twenty-two, to study for the priesthood at Naples. In the intervals of reading, he busied himself with works of devotion and charity, making long visits to the Blessed Sacrament, and consoling the inmates of hospitals and prisons. He had a special liking for neglected churches, seeking to make up by his attendance and prayers for the absence of worshippers in these uncared-for sanctuaries. After his Ordination in 1587, he joined a pious confraternity, known as the "The White Robes of Justice." This Society, like that of the better-known Misericorde, attended condemned criminals and prepared them to die well. All this time, Francis seems to have had in mind the founding of a new religious Order, and next year the matter came to a head. It happened that the same idea had also occurred to another devout man, Giovanni Agostino Adorno, who unburdened his mind on the subject in a letter addressed to another member of the Caracciolo family, named Fabricius Ascanio. The letter was delivered by a very natural error to our Saint, who saw in the occurrence a clear indication of the divine will. Joining in at once with John Adorno and Fabricius Caracciolo, our Saint and they retired for a while to the desert of Camaldoli, where the holy trio drew up the Rule of what was to be the Minor Clerks Regular. Francis then went to Rome to obtain the approval of the Pope for the new Foundation. Sixtus V was at that time in the midst of his strenuous pontificate, clearing the Papal States of the swarms of brigands which had long made that part of Italy one of the most insecure places in Europe, and in beautifying Rome with those stately public buildings which still reflect the glory of the Sistine rule. The Holy Father with quite unwonted alacrity approved the Congregation on 1st July of the same year (1588).

The new Congregation of the Minor Clerks Regular thus established was one of considerable severity. The Clerks bound themselves to distribute various practices of penance among themselves daily, so that while one fasted, another took the discipline, a third wore the hair-shirt and so on. The rest not so engaged were meanwhile watching in turn before the Blessed Sacrament. In addition to the three usual vows, a fourth was added—not to aspire after dignities (*de non ambiendis dignitatibus*).

At his solemn profession at Naples, 9th April, 1589, Fr. Caracciolo took the name of Francis, from his great devotion to the holy Founder of the Seraphic Order. Fr. Adorno dying two years later, Fr. Francis, entirely against his own wish, was chosen Superior of the Congregation. He showed himself a model in all that related to the Rule, but quite surpassed all his brethren in the matter of prayer and austerity. He meditated

several hours daily on the sufferings of Our Lord, and spent most of the night before the Blessed Sacrament. This he did, among other reasons, to make up as far as he could for the coldness and ingratitude of men, and often, too, the culpable negligence of indifferent ecclesiastics which so frequently caused the churches to be practically abandoned day after day. When kneeling before the altar, the face of Fr. Francis appeared to be lighted up with celestial glory, while he ejaculated from time to time a favourite sentence from the Scripture: "the zeal of Thy house hath eaten me up!" (*Ps. lxxviii. 10.*)

The first house of the Clerks was one at Naples, known as St Mary Major's, which had been made over to them by Sixtus V, but the expansion of the Congregation soon made it imperative to found others elsewhere. Spain early extended its welcome to the newest arrivals in the monastic field, and St Francis undertook no fewer than three journeys to that most Catholic country under the special protection first of Philip II and afterwards of his son, Philip III. On one of these voyages, the ship that bore the holy Founder and his fortunes was nearly wrecked, but the vessel was saved by the prayer of our Saint. Of course, there was the opposition of the good to be met and overcome, but the spiritual methods and perseverance of Francis were rewarded by the establishment of three branches—the House of the Holy Ghost at Madrid (20th January, 1599), that of Our Lady of the Annunciation at Valla, closed (9th September, 1601), and St Joseph at Alcala (1601). This last was opened in the University for the purpose of study and the requirements of the usual academic courses, and many of the aspirants to the Order in Spain spent some years there as part of their preparation for Holy Orders. Before this the Clerks obtained in Rome the Church of St Leonard afterwards exchanged for that of St Agnes in the Piazza Navona, the famous Church built on the traditional site of the martyrdom of St Agnes. It was entirely rebuilt in 1642, at the expense of the Pamfili family, and among the many monuments of artistic or historic interest is the tomb of the Princess Mary Talbot Doria-Pamfili, who died 1857. She was the beautiful daughter of the Sixteenth Earl of Shrewsbury, and one of the Maids of Honour to Queen Victoria at her Coronation in 1838.

In spite of the general knowledge as to the "fourth vow" of the Congregation against accepting or even seeking ecclesiastical honours, many desired to see the Founder exalted to what they considered a wider field of usefulness, and Pope Paul V, who greatly admired the heroic virtues and practical wisdom of Francis, wished to make him a bishop, but desisted at the earnest entreaty of the Saint. Besides his work for the Congregation, Francis unceasingly interested himself in the salvation of souls generally. He was much sought after as a confessor while his exhortations



brought to repentance numerous public sinners, and he fortified the wavering and the despondent by personal encouragement and the recommendation of the two great Catholic devotions, those to the Blessed Sacrament and to Our Lady. He had the gift of discerning hearts and of prophecy, and his own approaching death was made known to him one day, when, according to custom, he was praying before the altar of the Church of St Lauretana. He was at that time in negotiation with the Oratorian Fathers with reference to taking over their house at Agnone in the Abruzzi for the use of his Congregation, and he lost no time in going to that place. Arrived there, he was shortly after seized with fever, and having received all the last rites, he died surrounded by the Oratorian Community of the place on the Vigil of Corpus Christi, 4th June, 1608. His body was removed to the Church of St Mary Major, Naples, where it remained till it was transferred to the Church of Montivergonella which had been made over to the Clerks Regular, 1823, apparently in exchange for the other seized during the occupation of Naples by the French Revolutionary Army.

The Saint was proclaimed patron of the City of Naples in 1838, but the devotion to him which was once so marked a feature of the spiritual life of the place is said now to be much less in evidence. In addition to the Rule which he drew up in conjunction with his two holy coadjutors, St Francis Caracciolo also left a devotional treatise on the Passion, this work, apart from the inherent value of the subject, is precious as containing the holy reflections and aspirations of one of the outstanding notabilities of the Church in the last period of the Counter-Reformation—the lover of souls—who did so much to heal by his zeal and piety the wounds which heresy and iniquity had inflicted upon the Mystical Body of the Lord.

#### JUNE 13

### WOODHOUSE, THE BLESSED THOMAS, MARTYR

( ?-1573)

No date is assigned for the birth of the Blessed Thomas Woodhouse, who was one of the few "Queen Mary's Priests" who suffered for the Faith under Elizabeth, the policy of the Government being to let the old stock of Catholic clergy die out, and meanwhile prevent by all means, any others from taking their place. But our Martyr was something more than one of the old Marian priests. He is described in Dr Sander's "Report to Cardinal Moroni" (*Cath. Record Socy.*, vol. i. p. 18) as "Thomas

Woddus, Reginae Mariæ Capellanus," Chaplain in Ordinary to Her Majesty Queen Mary. Like all the old parochial clergy of England up to the mid-Tudor period, he had the title of "Sir" before his name. He appears from all written or reported evidence about him, to have been a man of singularly courageous character, and well would it have been for the Catholic Church in this country in that age of almost unexampled subserviency to the eastern despotism that had supplanted the larger freedom of Plantagenet times, if more had followed his example. Even when he was deprived of his chaplaincy or rectory in Lincolnshire, he warned the people round about to beware of the new State-supported heresy. After being expelled, he became a tutor in Wales in a gentleman's family, but shortly afterwards left, and while saying Holy Mass at a place unknown, was arrested and thrown into the Fleet Prison, London. Being removed thence with some other prisoners, during the plague, to Cambridgeshire, he reproved his jailer for eating meat during Lent, and observed with some humour that he would not stay in the same house with him! He kept his word, broke his somewhat "open arrest," and returned to the Fleet Prison. His frankness, and perhaps sense of the comic side of life, gained him the goodwill of his captors. Prisons in Tudor days were a compound of the horrible and the happy-go-lucky. Much depended on those in charge, while "rules" and "liberties" often allowed the better sort of inmates out under bond for days together. Among the enlarged, was the Rev. T. Woodhouse, who often availed himself of the privilege to visit his friends in London. While in captivity, Mr Woodhouse, who, as before remarked, had no human respect, and did not regard the person of men, wrote a letter to no less a personage than Lord Burleigh, reminding his lordship of the divine origin of the Primacy of St Peter and urging him to persuade the Queen to be reconciled to the Church. Bishop Milner in his *Letters to a Prebendary*, states that Elizabeth had informed the French Ambassador shortly after her accession, that privately she knew the Pope to be the true, visible Head of the Church, but that political considerations prevented her from acting upon that belief. It is not easy to reconcile this statement with facts, though, no doubt, there may have been some "foundation" for the report. For at the time of her coming to the Throne, the Catholic Church was the established religion, and by far the greater majority of her subjects professed it at least nominally. The new Queen had only to accept the ancient Faith as she found it, nay, as she had openly professed it during her sister's reign. In fact, the change of religion she introduced was a very considerable risk, and one that might easily have led to results far different. But in view of her former conformity, the late legal establishment of the Catholic Faith, and the Bull of Deposition of Pius V, Mr Woodhouse

obviously felt that the time had come for boldly putting the matter plainly before the great minister, and through him to his Sovereign. The "Eirenicon" runs as follows:

"Jesus

"Your Lordship will peradventure marvel at my boldness that dare presume to interpell your wisdom, being occupied about so great and weighty affairs touching the state of the whole realm. Howbeit, I have conceived that opinion of your Lordship's humanity that ye will not condemn any man's good-will, how simple or mean soever he be, which maketh me bold at this present to communicate my poor advice, what is very requisite and best for your Lordship to do in so great and ponderous affairs. Forasmuch, therefore, as Our Lord and God Jesus Christ, hath given supreme authority unto His blessed Apostle St Peter and in him to his successors, the Bishops of Rome to feed, rule and govern His sheep, that is to say, all Christians at such time as He said unto the same His Apostle thrice, 'Feed my lambs, feed My Sheep,' my poor advice is that ye humbly and unfeignedly even from the very bottom of your heart acknowledge and confess your great iniquity and offence against Almighty God, especially in disobeying that supreme authority and power of the See Apostolic, so ordained and established by the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, Jesus Christ, and that in all dutiful manner and apparent fruits of penance, ye seek to be reconciled unto that your supreme prince and pastor here on earth, appointed and assigned unto you by your Lord God and Redeemer, Jesus Christ. Likewise, that ye earnestly persuade the Lady Elizabeth, who for her own great disobedience is most justly deposed, to submit herself unto her spiritual prince and father, the Pope's Holiness, and with all humility to reconcile herself unto him that she may be the Child of Salvation."

This extract contains the real substance of this remarkable missive. It was dispatched to the Lord Treasurer by means of the washerwoman of the prison, and the writer was careful to state at the conclusion of the exhortation that she was "a hot Protestant," and had no knowledge of the contents. The date of the document was 19th November, 1572, but the reference to the late Bull of Deposition was not calculated to reconcile either the recipient or the Queen to the subject-matter of the contents. It led to a personal interview four days later between the intrepid priest and the great man. Woodhouse behaved with uncompromising firmness and courage in the presence of the Treasurer, who may be excused perhaps for "waxing a little hot!" He "grew cold again," however, towards the end of the conference, and even asked the priest honestly or ironically if he would be his chaplain and say Mass in his house? Woodhouse ex-

pressed his willingness to say Mass, but added that the Treasurer could not be present at it without being reconciled first. The whole affair must leave a strong impression on the mind of the present-day reader, that, with, say, a Benedict XIV or a Pius VII on the throne of St Peter in 1572, and a Consalvi or Caprara for his foreign minister, matters between the Elizabethan Court and Rome might have been settled to the satisfaction of both sides. But it is ever the case of "the hour and the man!"

Woodhouse was, indeed, one of the "old priests." He thought and acted in the spirit of the Middle Ages that had passed for ever, and for him the notion of concordats and compromises was not. At his trial at the Guildhall, in April, 1573, he showed the same Thomas à Becket spirit, denying the competency of the judges to try him, "being heretics" and "pretending authority from her that could not give it them." He was taken to Tyburn from Newgate (not the Fleet) on Friday, 13th June, 1573. He prayed in Latin, and true to the Church and State principles of a man "born out of due time," he refused to ask pardon of the Queen, retorting: "Nay, I, on the part of God, demand of you and of the Queen that ye ask pardon of God and of Holy Mother Church, because contrary to the truth, ye have resisted Christ the Lord and the Pope, His Vicar upon earth." He was alive during the disembowelling and is said to have spoken, but the words, if uttered, were not distinctly heard. He was admitted a member of the Society of Jesus shortly before his death, and though this fact was for a long time in question, it has since been established by various documents, notably a letter preserved among the Burleigh Archives, which was written by the Martyr not long before his death.

[Dom Bede Camm: *Lives of the English Martyrs*, vol. ii. (Cath. Record Society, vol. i.) Milner: *Letters to a Prebendary*. Challoner: *Memoirs of Missionary Priests*.]

JUNE 15

GERMAINE COUSIN, ST, VIRGIN

(1579-1601)

ALL roads, as the saying goes, lead to Rome, and if we substitute sanctity for the Alma Urbs, we shall at once realize the full meaning of the holy adage: *Deus mirabilis est in Sanctis ejus*—God is indeed wonderful in His Saints—and in His methods of making them! Some have been led to their glory by the example of holy parents, others by pious reading and exhortations; others again by seemingly irreparable misfortunes, and the thousand-and-one things that close the eyes of the truly wise to the things

of time to open them wide to those of eternity. St Germaine Cousin is one of those who, in the noble line of the Mantuan bard, found her vocation and her triumph much as the dutiful Æneas found his earthly kingdom "per tot discrimina rerum!" From the day of her birth, 1579, at Pibrac, a little village some ten miles from Toulouse, she was the victim of bodily affliction. One of her hands was deformed and she suffered from scrofula, the disease so prevalent under the title (in England) of "the King's Evil." No sovereign touch was forthcoming to heal the poor little sufferer of Pibrac, though the monarchs of France from St Louis down to Charles X regularly performed the ceremony. The loss of her mother in early childhood was the next great calamity of Germaine. Love is said to be "blind." It appears to be often bereft of other senses as well! For Germaine's father not long afterwards tied himself for life to a woman who might well have passed as the ideal hard-hearted stepmother of fiction! The new Madame Cousin, or *Femme Cousin*, as married women under noble rank were then styled in France, may have been right in segregating little Germaine from the rest of the children through fear of infection, but she need not have added to this hardship, persistent neglect and frequent ill-usage. The poor child was grudgingly given the home comforts afforded by a stable—and a contemporary French stable at that!—varied later on by a garret. Her bed at night was of straw or leaves, and during the day she was kept occupied tending the paternal sheep. Shepherds and doubtless shepherdesses also—the real variety not amateurs like the gilded *bergers* and *bergères* of the Trianon—are reported to have spent their long vigils in diverse ways. James Ferguson, the shepherd-boy astronomer, filled up his by making mechanical models and mapping the stars. Germaine Cousin's mind soared beyond the heavenly bodies to their Creator and hers, and occupied her days, and the greater part of her nights, with prayer to God and considerations on the truths of Faith.

It does not appear that Germaine could read. The rosary was her only book, and she probably knew little more than her prayers and what she learnt from the sermons and other verbal instructions in the Parish Church. But the really devout are never at a loss. Grace, and the various private inspirations that word covers, supplies the deficiency, and then as the *Imitation* reminds us: "If thou didst know the whole Bible by heart and the sayings of all the philosophers, what would it all profit thee without the love of God and grace?"<sup>1</sup>

The *Life* of the Saint in the Breviary, informs us that Germaine heard Mass daily and communicated every feast-day. Her devotion to Our Lady was remarkable, and from the wonderful stores of her acquired wisdom and holiness, she imparted frequent instructions in Christian doctrine to

<sup>1</sup> Book i, chap. i.

many of the peasant children of the district. No less was her charity to the poor. She always saved part of her own rough and not too abundant fare so as to be able to relieve the roaming mendicant and the destitute child. It is related in the Acts of her Canonization that God even in this life often rewarded His handmaid by signs and wonders, as when He caused some bread she had reserved as usual for "her poor," but which her harsh stepmother had hidden, to blossom forth into beautiful flowers. It is also recorded that she more than once walked on the surface of the waters of a flooded river on the way to Mass. Of course, for some time the devotions of this youthful hermit were regarded by the more thoughtless of the villagers as a subject for jest, but the unmistakable signs of holiness, which even the most casual observer could not help noticing, gradually silenced the voice of rustic criticism, and many who had been inclined to scoff, came to acknowledge that Pibrac and its district possessed a Saint in the poor little shepherdess who lived so much alone. Neighbours were not the only ones to learn the lesson. At the eleventh hour, Germaine's own father awoke to a sense of the great wrong he had permitted to be done to his daughter, and at last put his foot down and ordered his wife to treat her as well as the rest of the family. But just as history tells us that even prisoners after long years of confinement acquire a sort of attachment to their cells, so Germaine by this time had come to look upon her life of solitary pastoral care and communings with God the great Shepherd of Souls, as part and parcel of her existence. She had so long lived wrapped up in divine contemplation and the enjoyment of celestial delights, that mere human amenities, even those of her own home, seemed poor and profitless by comparison. It was in every way fitting that one whose whole life had been made up of hardship and neglect, even in the midst of her own family, should have left the world unnoticed. Germaine Cousin, the wonderful shepherd-girl who had experienced twenty-two years almost of griefs and sorrows that would have broken the resolution of even the strongest, was found dead on her rough bed of leaves by her father when he went to call her to her daily round one morning in the summer of 1601. The widespread reputation for holiness which had grown round Germaine Cousin shortly before her death, and the hard life she had endured so cheerfully and usefully, made the people of Pibrac desire to have her body interred in the Parish Church, and her remains were in consequence buried close to the pulpit. Forty-three years later the body was found incorrupt, and not only that, but elevated almost to the level of the church floor. The wooden coffin was now enclosed in one of lead, this latter a sort of thankoffering from a Mdme de Beauregard, who was believed to have been cured of a dangerous ulcer through the intercession of the holy girl. Nearly a century

after her death, the cause of Germaine began to be seriously proposed for Canonization, but it got no further apparently than discussion and some negotiation. During the Revolution (1793), the body was seized by some Jacobins, headed by a tinsmith, named Toulza, and after being dragged from the coffin was cast into quicklime and water, but was later recovered not much damaged and restored to its original sepulchre. Local devotion continued despite the vicissitudes of years, various miracles and spiritual and temporal favours through the intercession of the holy shepherdess were recorded, and in 1850 her Beatification was requested by the hierarchy of France. Among the miracles attested on this occasion was a then very recent one, relating to a wonderful supply of food for the poor people supported by the Good Shepherd Nuns at Bourges in the course of 1845. Other favours included cures of various apparently hopeless diseases, blindness, etc. The result of this was that on 7th May, 1854, Pope Pius IX declared Germaine Cousin, Blessed. On 29th June, 1867, the same great Pontiff enrolled her among the number of the Saints. St Germaine Cousin who ranks with St Zita, St Isidore the Labourer, and many others as one of the patrons of working-class life, is usually represented in Christian art in the dress of a shepherdess holding a crook, while a dog or a sheep rests at her feet.

[Veuillot: *Vie de la Bienheureuse Germaine* (Paris, 1904). Roman Breviary: *Pars Verna*. "Vies des Saints pour tous les Jours de l'Année" (Paris: Gabriel Beauchesne, 1920).]

JUNE 19

## MIDDLEMORE, THE BLESSED HUMPHREY, CARTHUSIAN, MARTYR

(?– $\bar{u}$ 1537)

HUMPHREY MIDDLEMORE, who ranks as the fourth of the Blessed Martyrs of the London Charterhouse, came of a stock long famous in Catholic annals—the Middlemores of Edgebaston, Birmingham. His father was Richard Middlemore, "Lord of Edgebaston," who died, 1503. The wife of this gentleman was Mary, daughter of Sir Thomas Throckmorton of Coughton, another name venerable in the history of the recusants. The year that Humphrey entered the Carthusians does not appear, but he was one of the three members of the Order to whom Thomas Bedyll, Archdeacon of Cornwall, came, not long after the martyrdom of the Blessed John Houghton and the others, to try and win them over to the Royal Supremacy. This Bedyll who was a B.C.L. of New College, Oxford, had been secretary to Archbishop Warham of Canterbury, and if

he were the official to whom that prelate when on his death-bed dictated the famous protest against the anti-papal policy of Henry VIII, that solemn scene and declaration seem to have made very little impression on him. He was probably one of the crowd of "new men," *i.e.*, unscrupulous upstarts, who in every revolution are bent on furthering their own fortunes, regardless of conscience or morality. The famous, or rather infamous, Parliament of 1529, was crammed with these knaves, the like of whom two centuries later evoked Swift's mordant irony.<sup>1</sup>

Bedyll came to the Charterhouse loaded with treatises and books against the primacy of the Pope. These works, of course, were Lutheran productions, full of false history, distorted quotations from Fathers and Councils, and animated by intense virulence against Rome. Ten years before, such literature would have cost the possessor his life very likely, at least in England, for Henry was still, despite the notorious looseness of his life where women were concerned, the "Defender of the Faith" in the original Catholic sense—the Prince who had sent his royal *Apologia* for the Seven Sacraments to Leo X, with the words: "Every Church of the faithful acknowledges and venerates the Roman See as its Mother and Primate. . . . If we have erred in anything, we offer it to be corrected, as it may please your Holiness." (Letter to Leo X.)

Now, like Solomon, his amours had undone him, and he was at war with Christ's Vicar—a war even to the death. Bedyll argued with Fathers Middlemore and Exmew, the Vicar and Procurator, for an hour and a half, and then departed for home, leaving the anti-papal treatises behind him. Next morning, being in bed and probably "done up" with his polemical exertions the day before, Bedyll sent for the Vicar and Procurator, and asked them if they or others of the Community had read these precious productions? He was told that though they (Fathers Middlemore and Exmew) had perused the same till nine o'clock the night before, they had lighted upon no argument to make them alter their opinion! Cardinals Baronius and Bellarmine were to come to exactly the same kind of conclusion with regard to similar attacks in the tomes of the *Magdeburg Centuriators* some fifty years later! Just as Queen Elizabeth is reported to have secretly gone to hear Campion preach, so current opinion at the time related that Henry himself, after the failure of his obsequious tool, paid a clandestine visit to the Charterhouse, and this time with the intention of disproving his own before-quoted words. To force all the Brethren to assert that every Church of the faithful does *not* "admit the Roman See as its Mother and Primate!"

<sup>1</sup> "I desired that the Senate of Rome might appear before me in one large chamber, and a modern representative in counterview in another. The first seemed to be an assembly of heroes and demi-gods, the other a knot of pedlars, pickpockets, highwaymen and bullies!"—*A Voyage to Laputa*, chap. vii.



was now the great, the royal task! If such a visit were paid, the scene that ensued must have been a truly dramatic one—the terrible King—Harry Tudor all over, despite the doubtless careful disguise—the flickering candelabra of the Chapter Room—the assembled white-robed community, detached, respectful, but determined! We can but wonder how the controversy progressed, and whether the chief spokesman reminded His Majesty of his own book, by this time famous over the Christian world and affording irrefragable arguments for the primacy of St Peter and his successors? Stubborn and ruthless as Henry was, it is amazing how even he, in the face of Europe and his own realms, could thus have so far demeaned himself as to eat his own words and give the lie to the mature production of his pen!

However this may have been, the result of this truly astonishing incident was that three weeks later, Dom Humphrey Middlemore, William Exmew and Sebastian Newdigate were close prisoners in the Marshalsea. That hold in 1537 was not the free-and-easy, happy-go-lucky place of confinement for “gentlemen jail-birds,” *i.e.*, debtors, contempt of Court offenders and the like, it was in Dickens’s early days, but “a most filthy prison” in contemporary estimation, and as the Tudor estimation was not squeamish in such matters, the condition of the place must have been simply horrible. There the three Carthusians were chained in a dungeon and right up to the time when they were brought forth to undergo their farce of a trial—the usual Tudor state cloak for prearranged murder—on 12th June, 1537. The charge of “Treason” alleged was that the accused Fathers could not repute the King “to be supreme head on earth of the Church of England under Christ.” A week afterwards, 19th June, these protomartyrs of the Ancient Faith were, in Scots’ covenanting phraseology, “justified.” The crowd around Tyburn witnessed the awful butchery of these venerable Fathers, murmuring, it is true, but doing nothing more, which, indeed, is the way crowds have, as John Mitchell was to learn on that bright May morning in 1848, when informed that the noise around the Dublin prison-van then taking him to transportation, was not that of an attempted rescue, but merely the “people” going—to a flower-show! No wonder the disillusioned patriot exclaimed in the bitterness of his soul: “Well done, my countrymen, you’ll be a nation—by and by!”

JUNE 19

NEWDIGATE, THE BLESSED SEBASTIAN, CARTHUSIAN,  
MARTYR

(1537)

THE father of this, one of the fellow-sufferers with the Blessed Humphrey Middlemore and William Exmew, was John Newdigate, King's Serjeant (at law), and Lord of the manor of Harefield, Middlesex. His wife was Amphelys Nevill. Of their seventeen children, Sebastian had he chosen to go with the tide, would, no doubt, have arrived at much worldly distinction, for after leaving Cambridge, he went to Court, and became a great favourite. He married, and had a daughter whom he named Amphelys, after his mother. Beyond these meagre statements, we know next to nothing of his early life. Judging by the few details that have come to hand, we may be justified in supposing that Sebastian was a character very like that of Saint Gabriel Possenti (1838-1862), whose life appears in this Supplement,<sup>1</sup> a youth, full of spirit, gay and modish, yet all the while conscious of a call to a great and holy destiny. Sebastian's wife died early, and possibly this sorrow may have had its share in revealing to him the full meaning of that word "transient," which is so indelibly written across the face of all sublunary things. This may have been so, but certainly the great and sinister change that came over the King (Henry VIII) about 1522, gave the young and highly-endowed gentleman-in-waiting furiously to think. Reports of the pagan delights which the spirit of the Renaissance had made the vogue at Whitehall, as in other high places throughout Europe, reached the ears of Lady Robert Dormer, Sebastian's sister, who had married Sir Robert Dormer of Wenge. She apparently came to see her brother to warn him of the moral perils of the Court, when he said to his sister, "what shall you say if the next news you hear of me shall be that I am entered to be a monk in the Charterhouse?" "A monk!" exclaimed the now astonished sister, who with true family bluntness added: "I should be less surprised to see thee hanged!" The lady was to see both eventualities come to pass!

Not long after this, the courtier-brother exchanged the "spacious days" of Whitehall, Eltham, and Hampton Court, for the solitude of the London Chartreuse. The same sister, who had expressed so much scepticism as to her brother's religious call, was still convinced that the whole idea was "impossible," for she again came to town to advise the Prior not to admit one who must before long be rejected as having no vocation. She got the second great surprise of her life when the Prior, the saintly

<sup>1</sup> See May 31.

Dom John Tynburgh, who died on the very eve of the Tudor "Terror," informed her that her brother showed every sign of becoming a very good religious. Lady Dormer, who seems to have had a wonderful love for, and interest in, this one of her several brothers, was greatly moved at this happy intelligence, and when she saw Dom Sebastian—probably for the last time in this world—she was able to note how far advanced he already was on the road to perfection. Whatever doubt there may be about Henry VIII's visit to the Charterhouse, there seems to be none with regard to his interview with Dom Sebastian, both in the Marshalsea and later in the Tower. The King flattered, argued and abused, but with the Faith at stake and death now well in sight, it was no time for temporizing. The ex-courtier spoke out and to the point, "When in Court, I served Your Majesty, I did it loyally and faithfully," he replied, "and so continue still your humble servant, although kept in this prison and bonds. But in matters that belong to the Faith and glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, to the doctrine of the Catholic Church and the Salvation of my poor soul, Your Majesty must be pleased to excuse me." The King then said: "Art thou wiser and holier than all the ecclesiastics and seculars of my kingdom?" Dom Sebastian: "I may not judge of others, nor do I esteem myself either wise or holy, being far short in either, only this I assure myself that the faith and doctrine I profess is no new thing, nor now invented, but always among the faithful held for Christian and Catholic. We must obey God rather than man."

JUNE 20

FRANCIS PACHECO OR PACECHO, S.J., THE BLESSED,  
MARTYR IN JAPAN  
(1565-1626)

LIKE so many of that heroic band of martyrs who suffered in Japan during the early decades of the seventeenth century, the Blessed Francis Pacheco was a Portuguese. He was born at Ponte de Lima, a small town in Portugal, 1565, and twenty years later, entered the Novitiate of the Society of Jesus. Though Sommervogel does not mention the fact, it seems very probable that he studied classics at the Collegio de las Artes, one of the Constituent Colleges of the University of Coimbra, then recently reformed, and at the height of its fame. The Collegio was under the direction of the Jesuit Fathers. In 1592, he was sent to Goa, the capital of Catholicism in the East Indies, and of the Portuguese possessions in those parts. While there, he taught theology for four years, and then in 1600 was appointed Rector of the Jesuit College of St Paul

at Macao, in China, a town which, since 1576, had been one of the Suffragan Sees of Goa. The College of St Paul was the chief College of the Province of Japan, and was known from the numbers of its alumni, who had suffered for the Faith, as the "Seminary of Martyrs." The See of Macao at that time was in a very flourishing condition, as in addition to native Christians, there were many Portuguese and other European residents, chiefly merchants and their dependants settled in the place. Besides the work of preparing for the mission-field, which was peculiarly theirs, the Jesuit Fathers took their full share in promoting the spiritual welfare of their own countrymen. The next posts filled by Father Francis were Superiorships at Arima and Camo. The date of his taking up the active part of Japanese Missionary life is not given. He was one of the band of martyrs put to death at Nagasaki, Japan, on 20th June, 1626, and for the description of the sufferings inflicted on the condemned, see notice of the Japanese Martyrs under February 5.

The other Jesuit Fathers and members of the Society, who died for the Faith, at the same time and place, were :—

Baltassar de Torres, *b.* at Grenada, 1563 ; John Baptist Zola, *b.* at Brescia (Italy), 1575 ; Vincent Cann, *scholastic*, S.J., *b.* at Corea, 1580 ; John Kinsaco, *b.* at Nagasaki, 1605 ; Peter Rinxei, *Japanese scholastic*, *b.* 1588 ; Michael Tozo, *Japanese scholastic*, *b.* 1588 ; Paul Xinsuki, *Japanese scholastic*, *b.* 1572 ; Gaspar San da Matzu, *coadjutor*, S.J., *b.* at Omura, 1565 ; Anthony Ixida, *b.* at Arima, Japan, 1570.

A letter giving an account of the martyrdoms was sent (to the General of the Jesuits?) by Fr. Peter de Moreion, S.J. There is also another narrative of the same, no doubt based on this letter in Cordura's *History of the Society of Jesus*, part vi., book xi. The above were beatified by Pius IX, 7th July, 1864, two years after the Beatification of a large number of other martyrs of Japan, the solemnity of which impressed the whole world, Catholic and Non-Catholic, and added a note of joyous triumph to the cadence of sorrow caused by the persistent attacks on the Holy See then in progress.

[*Bibliothèque de la Compagnie de Jésus*, vol. vi., part ii., by Charles Sommervogel, S.J. *Les Saints Confesseurs et Martyrs de la Compagnie de Jésus*, by Fredk. Rouvier, S.J. (Lille, 1893).]

JUNE 21

## THE JESUIT MARTYRS OF CANADA

(1642-1649)

CANADA, the name of which is said to be derived from the Indian word "Kannatha," a village or collection of huts, came very near passing under English rule as far back as 1629 when Louis and Thomas Kirke, two Scottish privateer captains of singular skill and daring, acting under a Commission from Charles I, conquered Quebec and took prisoner the Sieur Samuel de Champlain, the French Governor of "New France," as the vast "Dominion" was then called. The treaty of St Germain, three years later, restored the forcibly acquired territory again to Louis XIII, and but for this pact there would of course have been no "Conquest of Canada," 1759-60, no death of General Wolfe and the Marquis de Montcalm on the Heights of Abraham. Governor Champlain returned in 1633. It was during his rule (1615-35), that the Catholic Missions made great progress in Canada. Franciscan and Jesuit Fathers went far up country among the Hurons, Algonquins and Iroquois chiefly—fierce Indian tribes, whose "Braves," like the Norse Berserkers of old, idolized war and the red-handed foray, and held the mild dictates of Christianity in supreme contempt. The efforts of the Fathers to stabilize the nomadic people in "Kannathas" or villages, were not popular. The Iroquois, especially, resented what they considered a decadent innovation, and the preaching too of the missionaries against the awful inter-tribal feuds and wars with their lightning attacks, wholesale massacres, and diabolical acts of revenge, all helped to make the progress of the Gospel extremely slow.

The first missionary to die for the Faith during this period, was Brother René Goupil, who, while on his way back to Quebec, on 2nd August, 1642, together with Father Isaac Jogues, was seized by the Iroquois, and on the 29th September following, was cut down in the act of making the sign of the Cross on the forehead of a child whom he was very probably baptizing. Père Jogues, who, after various horrible tortures, succeeded in effecting his escape, returned to Paris, but later came back to resume his Apostolic labours among the Red Men. Père Jogues was born at Orleans, 10th January, 1607, and studied at Rouen. He came to Canada in 1636, and worked for years in the far-flung regions about the valley of the Mississippi. After returning to Canada as stated, he was sent, presumably by the authorities at Quebec, as Ambassador to the Iroquois, by whom he was killed, 18th October, 1646. With him was also slain Père (?) Jean de la Lande, born at Dieppe.

The other Jesuits who lost their lives in the cause of religion or Christian morality in 1648-49 were :

(a) Père Antoine Daniel, born at Dieppe, 17th May, 1601. At the time of his death, he was priest of the Mission of St Joseph with a congregation of about 400 families, mostly Hurons. On the morning of 14th July, 1648, while Père Daniel was saying Mass, the village was attacked by the Iroquois, and among the slain was the devoted missionary, who, however, baptized a number of catechumens before the end came.

(b) Père Jean de Brébeuf, "The Lion of the Huron Mission," born at Conde-sur-Vire, 25th March, 1593, of a very old Norman family, some members of which had fought under William the Conqueror and St Louis. He traversed the country in a canoe, evangelizing and baptizing, for many years, commencing with 1625. He was captured by hostile Indians, in March, 1649, and subjected to frightful tortures. His fingernails were torn off, boiling oil was poured over him in mockery of baptism, and finally his heart was plucked out. With him was also martyred—

(c) Père Gabriel Lalemant, born at Paris, 30th October, 1610. Fr. Lalemant suffered torture for seventeen hours, and was then killed by some blows from a tomahawk. The following month (7th December),

(d) Père Charles Garnier, born at Paris, 25th May, 1606, "The Lamb of the Huron Mission," who, after living among the Indians a life of great austerity, was shot down by some Iroquois and axed to death on the eve of the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, to which he had always a tender devotion. His friend and companion—

(e) Noel Chabanel,<sup>1</sup> was put to death the following day. He had been in Canada about six years, and had acquired a thorough knowledge of the Huron language, and the year before, on the Feast of Corpus Christi, had made a solemn vow to live and die for the conversion of the Indians.

These eight sufferers for the Faith in Canada, though only some names of a still larger and no less glorious band, were declared Blessed by Pope Pius XI, 21st June, 1925, the case of the *Beati* having been finally examined, 18th November, 1924, and 31st March, 1925.

[R. P. de la Rochemonteix : *Les Jesuits et la Nouvelle France. Almanach Catholique Francais pour 1926.* (Bloud et Gay, Paris.) Carl Ploetz : *Epitome of History.* (Blackie & Son, London.).]

<sup>1</sup> Born, 2nd February, 1613.

JUNE 22

FISHER, ST JOHN, CARDINAL AND  
BISHOP OF ROCHESTER, MARTYR

(1459 ?-1535)

THE year 1459 is commonly assigned as the date of the birth of this illustrious prelate, though it is more likely that the actual year was either 1466 or 1469. However, as the hatless Cardinal himself no doubt would have said, it matters not when or where this poor mortal life of ours begins, but a great deal how it is ended! The future glory of the English Church was born at Beverley, the town of the Minster and other Gothic grandeurs, in the East Riding of Yorkshire, though now chiefly remembered by Catholics of this country as the some time seat of one of the Sees of the restored hierarchy from 1850 to 1878. John Fisher was probably the youngest of the four children of Robert and Agnes Fisher, his father being a mercer of the town. One of the Cardinal's sisters afterwards became a Dominican nun, and was in the convent of the Order at Dartford, Kent, in her brother's diocese, for many years. It has been stated that young Fisher was educated at the Grammar School, Rochester, though how this could have been the case does not appear, as there is no mention made of the migration of the family from remote Beverley to the far-off Cathedral City of the Medway. It is now certain that he had his schooling in the Latin School of his native town, and thence went in 1483 to Michael House, Cambridge, a semi-collegiate foundation long since merged into Trinity. He became Bachelor in 1487, Master, 1491, and Fellow, 1491. On 17th December of that year he was ordained priest. He graduated D.D. in 1501, and about the same time was appointed Vice-chancellor of the University. The general poverty and decadence brought about by the Wars of the Roses were nowhere more apparent than at the Universities, which had in consequence of the mutual slaughter of the baronage greatly declined. Cambridge is described as being especially poor, and its students ill-provided for, and we can imagine the joy of the zealous Vice-chancellor when informed by the Lady Margaret Tudor, mother of the King (Henry VII) that she had resolved to found a Chair of Divinity in the great academic centre of the Cam! Fisher had been appointed confessor to that very holy Princess in 1497. It was her original intention to build a splendid chantry at Westminster, but as her ghostly father pointed out, the cause of religion would be better served in other ways. The result of this advice was Christ College, Cambridge, and two Chairs of Theology, one at Oxford, the other, as stated, at the rival University.

NOTE.—This Feast is now celebrated on 9th July.



### SAINT JOHN FISHER

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In the picture, St. John Fisher is wearing the robes of a cardinal. The cardinal's hat was sent to him by the Pope after he had been cast into the Tower by King Henry VIII. This made the King even more



The close connection of Fisher with the Court and his known holiness, learning, and austerity of life, suggested him to Henry as a very suitable occupant of the See of Rochester, vacant through the translation of Bishop FitzJames to Chichester. The Bulls of Consecration from that martial Pontiff, Julius II, came on 13th October, 1504, and on 17th November following, Fisher was consecrated Bishop of Rochester at Lambeth Palace, the consecrating prelate being Archbishop Warham, assisted by Wm. Smith, Bishop of Lincoln, and Richard Nykke, Bishop of Norwich.

The See of Rochester, which owes its foundation to St Augustine of Canterbury, the Apostle of the English nation, having been founded about A.D. 604, was at this time (1504), the poorest bishopric in England. The revenues were estimated at only about £300 a year, and if this sum means that value in modern currency, it is difficult to see how even Fisher, despite the extreme simplicity, or rather ascetic austerity, of his life, could have maintained the ordinary expenses of his "poor spouse," as he loved to term his See. Apart from the revenue, he had the episcopal palace of Rochester, and what may be called a London house, known as "La Place," on Lambeth Marsh, near Southwark Bridge.

The year of his promotion to the episcopate, Fisher was appointed Chancellor of Cambridge. To such a man this was no mere splendid sinecure. He not only superintended personally the building and organization of Christ College, and later the erection of the Lady Margaret's other munificent Foundation, St John's College, but took a very active part in what may be called the "evangelizing" of the poor. Among the many ecclesiastical abuses rife at this period, want of popular instruction in religion was not the least. He advised the Lady Margaret to endow certain preacherships with the proviso that the holders were to deliver sermons in various parts of the country. But as example is better than precept, the holy Bishop himself frequently gave discourses, notably a series on the Penitential Psalms, and when the Lutheran heresies were finding their way into the kingdom, Fisher from the pulpit more than once explained the true teaching of the Church on the points at issue. It was, undoubtedly, ignorance of the Catholic religion among the masses that gave the Reformation in this country, as in Scotland, its great chance, and had Fisher's timely warning on the subject been attended to, it seems not unlikely that even Henry VIII and his Sejanus, Cromwell, would have been unable to wrest the nation from the faith of its forefathers.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The tenth Canon of the too belated Provincial Council of Edinburgh, under Archbishop Hamilton of St Andrews and "Legatnait" (*Legatus Natus*), held in January, 1552, set forth that "having regard finally to the fact that neither the prelates nor the inferior clergy of the Kingdom are, as a rule, sufficiently learned properly to instruct the people in the faith, or to

The saintly Bishop was not only zealous in instructing the ignorant, but he was equally untiring in all other branches of pastoral work. He frequently visited the sick and poor of his own diocese in their own homes, consoled and relieved the needy, and where advisable, administered the last rites of the Church. He would sometimes sit for hours together in the meanest hovel and most noisome abode, instructing, exhorting, admonishing, ever faithfully carrying out the duties of the *bonus pastor*.

In his own private life he practised the mortifications employed by the Saints in all ages, eating very sparingly, observing rigorous fasts, praying much over and above the Canonical Hours, and allowing himself usually not more than four or five hours rest! He took great delight in study, and though he never aspired to the distinction of being considered a paragon of learning, soon became as famous over Europe for his scholarship, as he was for the sanctity of his life. When the Fifth Lateran Council was being held, in 1513, there was some question of Fisher going to Rome as the delegate or representative of the English Church, but though a sum of £500 was assigned for his expenses, he did not proceed to the Eternal City. His presence in England, however, was very fortunate, for he was able to prevent some changes being made in the carrying out of the will of the Lady Margaret which would have proved very prejudicial to her Foundation, St John's College. The Bishop of Rochester not only saw that infant institution well through all initial difficulties, but he further showed his deep interest in the place by founding Lectureships in Greek and Hebrew—those two pet children of the Renaissance—besides adding several scholarships on his own account. This must have been almost Fisher's last eminent service to the University as Chancellor, an office which he resigned in 1514 in favour of that rapidly rising star, Thomas Wolsey, just created Archbishop of York and presently to be elevated to the purple.

Though the affection of Fisher for his Sovereign dated from the days of the latter's childhood, he was too upright a man to be a mere pliant, obsequious courtier. The immense treasures which the late King and his harpies, Empson and Dudley, had wrung or cozened out of the old nobility and others, were soon squandered in a war with France, every whit as foolish, criminal and useless as was that of the Hundred Years.

convert those in error—the Council decrees that a Catechism is to be compiled for the instruction of the clergy as well as of their flocks written in the Scottish tongue and drawn up by the most learned prelates and theologians of the Scottish Church." The result of this decree was the publication *within six months* of "The Catechisme," giving concise but excellent instructions on the Creed, Ten Commandments, Seven Sacraments, and Prayer, but, as before stated, the admirable little book was at least twenty years too late! See Bellsheim: *History of the Catholic Church of Scotland*, vol. ii., chap. v.

In 1523, the great Lord Cardinal swept into Convocation, a dazzling, moving pageant of scarlet robes, silver crosses and pillars, and gorgeously arrayed attendants. It was to demand yet another grant, and of course, for the War! The dignified ecclesiastics voted it after a formal debate, but Fisher boldly led the opposition in a speech which unfortunately does not appear to have been preserved.

Less than ten years later was he again to be in opposition, not to a subsidy, but to the beginning of a schism which was to drench the nation with innocent blood, fill the realm with doctrinal confusion, and make its Church an outcast from both East and West! It is something more than a coincidence that the imperious Cardinal having overawed the Clergy should have then proceeded to override the Commons. There however he was successfully withstood by the Speaker, that Sir Thomas More who was to stand by Fisher in the larger and nobler cause, and with him to pour forth his blood in witness of the unity of Christ's Church.

It would serve no purpose to relate at large the sordid story of the rise and progress of the scandal of the royal divorce. No candid, well-informed person can now be ignorant of the main facts of the case, or affect to believe that anything else but an unholy passion, mingled, possibly, with the desire for an heir-male to the Throne, could have led Henry to seek to dissolve, after nearly twenty years of wedded life, his marriage with his virtuous but by this time, elderly Queen. Among the many consulted by the King in the hope of making out a strong case for the divorce, was Bishop Fisher. Now although that learned and holy prelate knew that the appeal of the King and his abettors to the Levitical Law of the ancient Jews as against the living judgment of Christ's Vicar, was merely a piece of hypocrisy to give a show of religion and legality to a bad cause, he nevertheless set himself diligently to study the whole question, both of the marriage of the King with the widow of his deceased brother Arthur, and the papal dispensation that had authorized it. It may be stated here that though Catharine had married Prince Arthur, as she did at St Paul's Cathedral, on 14th November, 1501, the marriage was never consummated, and that when she later (1509) married his brother, Henry, she went to the altar as a virgin bride, attired in white, and this fact of her virginity at that time was solemnly deposed to both by herself and other unimpeachable witnesses of her own sex. In fact, the dispensation of Julius II had been granted on that very condition, *i.e.*, that the first marriage with Arthur had not been consummated, and there had of course been no objection raised anywhere in Christendom to the undoubted power of the Pope to dispense in such a case. In May, 1527, Bishop Fisher gave in his answer to the King's query. He said that after having studied the whole matter long and carefully, he did not doubt

"that considering the plenitude of the power which Christ had conferred on the Sovereign Pontiff, the Pope could for some very grave reason dispense for such a marriage . . . otherwise to no purpose Christ would have said: 'Whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in Heaven.'"

This answer must have been a terrible blow to Henry's expectations of a settlement of the question through the ordinary and regular channels. Meanwhile the Pope, Clement VII, deferred the inevitable hostile judgment against the King in the hope, of course, that time, weariness and better counsels would prevail, and Henry be led to desist from his unholy design. When the Peers—acting under great pressure from the Court—petitioned the Pontiff to accede to the King's wishes, Clement replied with spirit, and it need scarcely be added that the historic Commission to Cardinals Wolsey and Campeggio to try the issue at the Blackfriars (June, 1529), was merely another expedient to prove yet again to the English Court and the world, how utterly impossible it was for the Church, through her visible ruler, to annul the law of Christ. At that trial, Bishop Fisher appeared as one of the Counsel for the Queen. As usual he did not mince matters, but boldly told the no doubt astonished courtiers that he espoused the cause of her Majesty "to avoid the damnation of his soul," and "to assert and demonstrate with cogent reasons that this marriage with the King could not be dissolved by any power divine or human!" From that moment he was the mortal enemy not only of Henry—whose resentment meant death!—but also of Anne Boleyn, and his fate was now merely a matter of time.

In every great crisis, religious or political, there are always those who really believe or affect to see some remarkable natural portent or even alleged supernatural coincidence, that in their opinion bears exactly on the case. The "Angels of Mons," and the several mystical allusions referred to in the *Apocalypse* which set numbers of persons thinking even during the slaughter and other calamities of the late World-War, are instances in point. The divorce proceedings of Henry called forth the "Holy Maid of Kent," Elizabeth Barton, a Benedictine nun of St Stephen's, Canterbury, who professed to have received heavenly warnings of the evils that would fall upon the King if he persisted in the course he had begun. The "Maid" paid a visit to Fisher and was kindly received by him, but he gave no decided opinion on the subject of her alleged visions and prophecies, prudently contenting himself with stating that such matters, while possible, are always to be treated with great caution. After the conviction and execution of the nun for "treason," Fisher was condemned by an Act of Parliament. The charge was "misprision of treason," *i.e.*, of concealing it after the fact, and his Lordship was sentenced to be imprisoned

during the King's pleasure, and to forfeit all his goods. The old Bishop was at this time in a miserable state of health, and so to make sure of something, the Court ultimately allowed him to compound by paying a fine of £300—a whole year's revenue of his See!

Two years before this, Fisher had yet again run counter to the royal will in the matter of the notorious "Supreme Headship" question, debated in the Convocation of that time. For acknowledging the late Cardinal Wolsey's legatine authority—though this had not only been sanctioned but even commanded by Henry as far back as 1521—the clergy were declared to have incurred a *præmunire*, but were graciously to be allowed to get off on condition of paying the Crown the terrific sum of £100,000, 8s. 4d., over a million in our currency, and acknowledging Henry as Supreme Head on earth of the English Church.<sup>1</sup>

Had the English hierarchy shown anything like the magnificent courage of the French bishops, who, at the time of the great Revolution almost instantly rejected, in the face of Jacobin fury and menace, the Schismatical "Civil Constitution of the Clergy"—all would have been well. For all his brutality and bluff, Henry like most bullies, receded before a bold front, as witness his decidedly panic-stricken behaviour when the Pilgrimage of Grace began to assume "alarming proportions!" But alone of all that sycophant assembly, the noble Fisher stood forth reminding, with prophetic voice, the episcopate that the Supreme Headship, if granted, might easily come in course of time to a woman or even to a child! Thanks to this heroic but solitary champion, the Convocation did qualify its submission to the King with the memorable clause:—*Quantum per legem Dei licet*—"as far as it is allowed by the law of Christ"—which even Henry deemed it expedient to accept.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Statute of *Præmunire* (1393) forbade the introduction into England of Bulls and other processes of the Pope when these related to civil matters triable in the King's Courts. The Act did not, of course, refer to Bulls, etc., concerning purely spiritual affairs. The Archbishops of Canterbury from the time of St Anselm (1033-1109), were the *Legati-Nati* or *ex officio* Legates of the Pope in England. That privilege seems to have been first conferred on the Archbishop, just named, by Urban II. Any other Legate coming into the Kingdom required the licence of the Government before he could exercise his office.

As considerable misunderstanding appears to exist among non-catholics with regard to the spiritual authority of the Popes in England before the Reformation, it may be stated here that the occupant of the Holy See was regarded in this country as elsewhere, as (1) the Successor of St Peter and visible Head of Christ's Church on earth; (2) the Supreme Judge of all religious controversies, and of all ecclesiastical laws; (3) the source of all ecclesiastical discipline. Hence the Pope conferred the Pall on Archbishops, and the Bulls of Consecration on all Bishops-elect, erected, modified or suppressed Sees, Orders, and other religious institutions.

<sup>2</sup> "The Royal Supremacy was not at the time of the Convocation regarded as inconsistent with the legitimate claims of the Papacy." Dean Hook: *Lives of the Archbishops of Canterbury*, vol. vi., p. 424. See also F. W. Maitland's *Roman Canon Law in the Church of England* (Methuen & Co., London, 1898).

Bishop Fisher celebrated his last Easter Sunday at his Cathedral in April, 1533. Shortly afterwards, he was summoned to London to "Swear to the Succession" *i.e.*, to acknowledge the lawfulness of the offspring of Henry and Anne Boleyn as heir to the Throne. Sir Thomas More and many others had seen no difficulty about that, and Fisher, too, was quite prepared to accede to this part of the royal demand, but the Oath, as settled by Parliament, involved an acknowledgment of the King as Supreme Head over the English Church. Like Sir Thomas, Fisher refused to subscribe to the proposed declaration, and was committed to the Tower (16th April). He was deprived of his books, and being in fast failing health, must have died from sheer want, had not his brother Robert and the good Italian merchant, Antonio Bonvisi, the friend both of himself and the Ex-Chancellor, supplied the holy old Bishop with various necessities. He daily prepared himself for the death which he now knew to be imminent, but lost nothing of his dry humour, and was even able to write some religious treatises such as the *Spiritual Consolation*, and *The Necessity of Prayer*—works highly valued ever since for their excellent matter, the character of the author, and the tragic conditions under which they were composed. On 7th May, 1535, Cromwell, the Royal Vicar-General, visited him in his cell, and read both the Act of Supremacy passed the previous November definitely conferring on the King the Supreme Headship of the Church, and another Act making denial of that claim "Treason." The brave Bishop again refused his assent, and from that hour his doom was sealed.

Fifteen days later, Pope Paul III in the creation of Cardinals at the Consistory just after his accession, nominated Fisher Cardinal Priest of the Church of St Vitalis. Though this act was no doubt to honour Fisher's illustrious holiness, learning and zeal, there can be little question that it was also intended to save the venerable captive from his impending fate.

It was thought not only at Rome, but generally abroad, that Henry, even if the affection for his old friend and monitor was now turned to violent hate, would never dare to slay a Cardinal Prince of the Church, one of the august counsellors of the Pope, and the titular "Cousin" of every sovereign in Europe! The world had yet to learn the length of the English King's barbarity and vengeance! "Paul may send him the hat, I will see that he never hath a head to wear it on!"—So popular report soon tersely paraphrased the outburst of the Tudor Nero on hearing the news of his intended victim's promotion to the purple robes of empire and of martyrdom.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The actual words of Henry were: "Well, let the Pope send him a hat when he will, but I shall so provide that whensoever it cometh, he shall wear it on his shoulders, for head shall he have none to set it on."

Fisher had already been deprived of his See and title—as far as the State could effect this end, and so his trial on 17th June, 1535, took place at Westminster Hall, as in the case of a commoner of distinction.<sup>1</sup>

The Chancellor, Lord Audley, presided. The point of the long indictment was that the accused had said that “The King our Sovereign Lord, is not Supreme Head on earth of the Church of England.” The jury, as in the case of the Carthusian Priors, were terrorized into giving a verdict against the illustrious prisoner, and amidst the tears even of some of the judges and of course of most of the spectators, the venerable Bishop received—though unmoved—the traitor’s doom.

The horrible sentence was changed into the more dignified and expeditious one of beheading, not so much out of mercy as from the fact that the mere dragging to Tyburn on a hurdle would have certainly caused the aged prelate’s death on the way. The five days that elapsed between condemnation and execution, were spent by Fisher prayerfully as usual, but with no apparent additional preparation for his fate. Death had so long been a vivid reality with him, that he required no special course of exercises to enable him to meet it with resignation. When awakened by the Lieutenant of the Tower on the morning of the fatal day, 22nd June, and informed that he was to die about nine o’clock, he quietly observed : “Let me, by your patience, sleep an hour or two, for I have slept very little this night, and yet to tell you the truth not for any fear of death, I thank God, but by reason of my great infirmity and weakness.” That weakness indeed was so obvious that the Cardinal had to be carried in a chair part of the way to the scaffold on Tower Hill. Before reaching the steps, Fisher opened the New Testament he had in his hand, and read at random these words : “Haec est autem vita aeterna: ut cognoscant Te, Solum Deum verum, et quem misisti Jesum Christum. Ego Te clarificavi super terram; opus consummavi, quod dedisti mihi ut faciam. Et nunc clarifica me Tu, Pater, apud te ipsum claritate quam habui” etc. (*St John* xvii, 3,4). He spoke with wonderful strength and clearness to the assembled crowd, reminding the people that he had come thither “to die for the faith of Christ’s Holy Catholic Church,” ending by praying that Almighty God of His infinite goodness might “save the King and this

<sup>1</sup> The spiritual peers have never claimed the right to be tried as peers, since the ancient “Benefit of Clergy” (*Privilegium Fori*), entitled them to be tried by the Ecclesiastical Courts. When Cranmer was arraigned, in 1553, for treason in the affair of Lady Jane Grey, he claimed a jury and not a trial before the Lords, and since then the privilege has never been put forward.

The right of peers to trial by the House of Lords in all cases of treason and felony, first occurs in Magna Charta, in the clause *Judicium Parium*. The Lord High-Steward presides as judge on these occasions, and the peers form the jury. They give their verdict singly and upon their honour, the issue being decided by the majority. See E. W. Ridges: *Constitutional Law of England*. (Stevens & Sons, London, 1905.)

realm," and "that it may please Him to hold His holy hand over it and send the King good counsel." One blow of the axe sufficed to sever the slender neck of the holy and heroic protagonist of the Petrine claims, whose venerable body was allowed to remain all day on the scaffold, literally weltering in the blood that poured forth in great abundance. Towards night, two soldiers carried the corpse on their halberds to All Hallows Church, Barking, and having dug a rough grave, tumbled the body of the holy martyr into it, without prayer or ceremony. The sacred remains were subsequently reinterred in the Chapel of St Peter ad Vincula in the Tower, while the head was placed on a spike on London Bridge. This sacred relic was afterwards removed owing to the veneration paid to it by the people, and all trace of its later history has unfortunately been lost.

The murder of this "divine prelate," as Erasmus termed Fisher, literally staggered all Europe. Pope Paul III, in a letter to Francis I of France, told that monarch "that he is compelled by the unanimous solicitations of the Cardinals to declare Henry deprived of his kingdom and royal dignity." (*Letters and Papers Henry VIII*, vol. viii, No. 1117.) Nothing however was done in the matter, the English King being left to the execrations of courts and scholars and the dark reflections of his own depraved mind. Among the many *Lives* of the Martyr that have appeared, may be mentioned the memoir by Richard Hall of Christ's College, Cambridge, published by Thomas Bailey, 1665. Another by Rev. John Lewis in 2 vols. appeared in 1855. The latest *Life* by the Rev. T. E. Bridgett, C.S.S.R., 1888, is replete with new material, and in consequence throws much light on various phases of the great Cardinal's history, hitherto obscure.

The few names that have been mentioned of Cardinal Fisher's works, do not exhaust the literary output of his pen. His collected writings were published in 1597, by Fleischmann of Würzburg, in one folio volume. This edition includes the *Assertio Septem Sacramentorum* of Henry VIII against Luther, but there is no reason to deprive the King of the chief glory of that renowned treatise, though it is quite likely that Fisher gave assistance in the way of general advice, suggestions as to sources of information, etc. The memory of the glorious example of its martyred Bishop lived long in Rochester and its vicinity. During the years 1571-74, when, owing to the pressure of the Elizabethan Government and its Genevan agents, Protestantism of the most extreme type was being actively enforced all over the land, it was reported that in the diocese of Rochester "popish gear was reserved in private houses, popish prayer-books were used, people ran from place to place under pretence of an 'hypocritical Romish conscience, papist idolaters, invokers



of saints departed, defenders of false doctrines, men's merits, holy water, holy bread and of Romish pardon,' were abroad." <sup>1</sup> Finally, it may be remarked, the holy Cardinal was Beatified, together with fifty-four of the other English Martyrs, by Leo XIII, on 29th December, 1886. He was canonized with the Blessed Thomas More, by Pope Pius XI, 19th May, 1935, amidst the rejoicings of the whole Catholic world which had long acclaimed this noble pair as the leaders of that heroic band which in the hour of trial cheerfully laid down their lives in witness to the divine authority of Peter's Keys.

JUNE 26

THE FOUR SISTERS OF CHARITY OF ARRAS,  
BLESSED, MARTYRS  
(1794)

EVEN when the reign of Terror in France was at his height, the Sisters of Charity at Arras still continued their noble work of devotion and mercy among the sick and poor of the town, where as in all other quarters, they were deeply venerated by all classes of the community. After the persecution against the Church and the religious Orders became acute, Sister Madeleine Fontaine, the Superioress, or "*Sœur Servante*" of the Convent—as St Vincent wished the head of each house to be styled—sent two of the younger sisters for safety into Belgium, while she herself together with *Sœurs Marie Lavel, Thérèse Fanton* and *Jeanne Gérard*, the older members of the Community, nobly remained behind at their posts. The good sisters, of course, had much to suffer before the climax came, for they were deprived of Mass and Sacraments, shut off from the Mother House, and harassed in various ways by the Republican fanatics. To placate the Jacobin despots, the nuns laid aside their characteristic white *Cornettes*, and in fact made every concession that did not involve a sacrifice of principle. After some weeks, the little community was called upon to take the Oath of "*Liberté, Égalité et Confraternité*," which of course was different from the Civil Oath of the Clergy already condemned as schismatical by the reigning Pontiff, Pius VI. The *Liberté*, etc., Oath, however, had been condemned by many of the French bishops, as it had at that time a distinctly erroneous significance—*i.e.*, one implying a denial of ecclesiastical authority. The four sisters bravely refused the Oath, and on 15th February, 1794, they were arrested. The awful work of the "Terror" was then in full progress at Arras under the direction of the "Citizen"

<sup>1</sup> Rochester MSS. vii., f. 118, (2) f. 128 v (14, 19).

Joseph Lebon, an apostate priest, who soon filled the jails with persons of every class, many of whom were sent to the guillotine without any kind of trial. A vile woman named Mimi, the so-called wife of Lebon, took a leading part in all the local atrocities that were committed by him and the other Jacobin fiends in power. For hours in succession this dreadful hag used to sit watching the executions from a balcony, all the time gloating over the wretched victims as they were hurried to the scaffold!

During the four months that the Sisters of Charity remained in prison at Arras, they exercised a very happy influence over all the inmates by their cheerfulness and resolute determination not to be appalled by the terrors of the situation. In May, 1794, Lebon and his myrmidons removed the guillotine to Cambrai, where the bells were ordered to be rung to celebrate the coming of the "Red Widow" into the town! At the same time the children of the schools were forced to witness "the fall of the apricots!" as the horrible Mimi described the daily executions, or murders rather, which in Arras alone, exceeded two thousand!<sup>1</sup>

On 25th June orders came to Arras for the transfer of the four Sisters of Charity to Cambrai. The Sisters, though they knew that this "arrêt" was nothing less than a summons to death, were very cheerful. With an inspiration that seems to have been supernatural, Sœur Fontaine, the Superior, bade the rest of the prisoners be of good heart, for that theirs—the Sisters—would be "the last blood shed!" This reassuring belief they repeated again to some other prisoners they met on the road. Upon arriving at the Court, the Sisters were required to take the obnoxious Oath, but at once they replied, "Our conscience forbids us to take it!" Sentence of death was at once passed, and the four went straight from the hall of Jacobin "justice" to the scaffold. It was market-day—for folk will buy and sell, in spite of revolutions and ever present tragedy!—and amidst the crowds and the sunshine, these heroic spiritual daughters of St Vincent passed to their death as blithe as chaffinches—"gaiès comme des pinsons!" The spirit of Sir Thomas More must surely have smiled approval at such a scene, so like the one that gained for him also the crown of martyrdom. Standing erect on the bloody scaffold, the valiant Mother Superior while waiting her turn to suffer, cried out with a loud voice to the crowd: "Christians, listen to me! We are the last victims! The persecution will cease and the altars of Jesus will be restored!" It was a true prophecy! That same night the infamous Lebon, while in the very act of making out fresh lists of victims, was summoned to Paris on some

<sup>1</sup> Alison: *History of Europe*, iv., chap. xv. The bloodthirsty fury of the Jacobins spread to their children in many cases. A favourite "toy" of this horrible period was a small model guillotine with which these little darlings amused themselves decapitating mice and birds!

business of the Terrorists, and although he came back to Cambrai, it was after the fall of Robespierre, and the consequent end of the deluge of blood, which for a year had re-enacted all over unhappy France horrors exceeding in extent and atrocity those even of the ancient proscriptions of Marius and Sulla! The four Sisters of Charity, whose noble lives and heroic deaths are among the brightest glories of the French Church, were Beatified by Benedict XV, 13th June, 1920.<sup>1</sup>

JUNE 28

SOUTHWORTH, THE BLESSED JOHN, PRIEST, MARTYR  
(1592-1654). Beatified Dec. 15, 1929.

GREAT interest attaches to this venerable sufferer for the Faith by reason of the fact that very recently (December, 1927), his sacred remains were translated from Douay to England for (temporary) reinterment at St Edmund's College, Ware, which shares with Ushaw the honour of being the representative of Cardinal Allen's famous Foundation.

John Southworth was the son of a member of the junior branch of the Southworths of Samlesbury Hall, Blackburn. The estate, which came to the family in the fourteenth century, was at the time of the martyr's birth, very much reduced owing, to the heavy fines and other exactions of the Recusancy Laws. John Southworth, the Martyr, the subject of these remarks, was born in 1592. Under the name of Lee, he was admitted into Douay College, July, 1613, and was ordained priest, Holy Saturday, 1618, and on the 28th of June of the following year, he left the College to enter the Benedictines at Douay. He apparently did not remain, for on 13th December, 1619, he received faculties from the President of the English College and left for the Mission.<sup>2</sup> He paid a visit to his Alma Mater in March, 1624, and in July of that year went to Brussels where he acted as Chaplain for a time to the Benedictine nuns there (*Douay Diaries*, vols. x and xi *passim*, Cath. Rec. Society). His native Lancashire, however, was the chief scene of his labours, and there he was arrested, and in 1627 sentenced to death for being a priest. As Charles I was on the Throne and the Queen, Henrietta Maria, was a zealous Catholic, such sentences at that time were usually followed by reprieves. It was so in this case, though Mr Southworth was not released but kept a prisoner in Lancaster Castle until transferred to the Clink Prison, London.

<sup>1</sup> Justice swiftly overtook the infamous Lebon, who was arrested the following August, and after a very prolonged trial, guillotined, October 15, 1794. The sprightly Duchess of Abrantes in her *Memoirs* (vol. vii., pp. 213-14) states that this monster had once been noted for his gentleness and urbanity! but had been ruined in character by Robespierre.

<sup>2</sup> There is no commemoration of the Bl. J. Southworth in *The Benedictine Almanac and Guide*, 1928 (Catholic Records Press, Exeter). The Martyr was among the number (136) of those declared Blessed by Pope Pius XI, December 15, 1929.

In April, 1630, he was with fifteen other priests, prisoners, liberated at the intercession of the Queen, and sent to the French Ambassador, the Count de Chasteauneuf for passage to France. If he went abroad, as Bishop Challoner remarks, he was soon back again, and also soon again in the Clink Prison, but this time with leave to go at large under surety. He was again released under the warrant of Sir Francis Windebank, Secretary of State, who was well affected to the Faith, in which he died (1646).

After his enlargement, Mr Southworth lived in Clerkenwell, but during the ravages of the plague in London in 1636, he and another "popish priest" were indefatigable in ministering to the sick in Westminster. They were complained against by the Rev. Robert White, sub-curate of St Margaret's, in a petition to Archbishop Laud. Mr Southworth was chiefly remarked upon for going into the houses under the pretence of delivering alms, but really "to seduce" the people. In this way one Wm. Baldwin, then on his death-bed, had been reconciled to the Church of Rome, as also a Wm. Stiles.

As long as the royal authority lasted, Mr Southworth and other priests were tolerably secure, but the Civil War of course brought about a great change for the worse. The very fact that all the Catholic nobility and gentry were actively supporting the King in arms, was enough to arouse Puritan fanaticism and the clamour for the execution of the penal laws. The arrest of Mr Southworth apparently took place in 1654, and at night, for he is said to have been taken in his bed, and at the instance of a pursuivant named Jeffries.

Though Mr Southworth had been convicted before, and was therefore liable, it seems, to all the penalties of treason, he was not sentenced forthwith, but put on his trial again at The Old Bailey, for his priesthood. The judges were very favourable to the accused, and as Bishop Challoner says, "they did the utmost to preserve his life, and to prevent the execution against him of these laws upon which he stood indicted." This attitude was the beginning of that kindly spirit in the judiciary of this country as far as Catholic priests were concerned, which in the succeeding century reached its height in the amiable Lord Chief-Justice Mansfield, the friend of Pope. Their Lordships pressed him to plead "Not Guilty" to the indictment charging him with treason, which he would not deny, as he thought, though no doubt erroneously, that such a denial would be a sort of abjuring of the Catholic religion. This being so, the judges could do no more, and the jury in the then state of the law, had no other alternative than to return a verdict of guilty. On the 28th of the month (June, 1654), the old priest was taken to Tyburn, and though the day, as a cynic might say, was a typical English June one, both wet and stormy, great numbers

of persons, including many of the quality in coaches, went to the place of execution. The "last speech" of the condemned strikes one as being very opportune, for it was a direct reminder to the Government of the Commonwealth that it was now putting into force that very principle of religious persecution which had been one of the chief grievances of its supporters in the late reign.

With the good Father were also put to death five coiners. The Martyr's body was delivered to a member of the Duke of Norfolk's family, and by him transmitted to Douay for burial.<sup>1</sup> The remains of the holy priest were interred near the altar of St Augustine in the Chapel of the English College, Douay, where it was venerated up to the time of the French Revolution. The States-General opened its momentous Session in May 1789, but it was not till 1791 that the outlook in France began to be really menacing. When war broke out between the Jacobin Government and England after the execution of Louis XVI, in January, 1793, a mob of "Citizens" invaded the College and plundered it of its books, MSS., and furniture. The valuable silver plate, much of it the gift at various times of the old Catholic families, was buried and so remained till May 1863, when Monsignor Searle received permission from Napoleon III to search for it. The recovered articles were divided between Ushaw and St Edmund's College. With the chalices, flagons, loving-cups, salvers, etc., was buried, though not in the same place, the body of the holy Martyr, Fr. John Southworth. About the middle of 1926, the old buildings of Douay College, which had been used for various purposes since 1793, were sold to the Municipal authorities and pulled down to make way for building plots. During the excavations, the workmen lighted upon a leaden coffin, which when broken into, was found to contain a body wrapped in linen. Near it was a box from which were taken what proved to be the hair-shirt of St Thomas of Canterbury and the scarlet biretta of St Charles Borromeo. Unfortunately the hair-shirt was thrown away, but the biretta was retained. As soon as the news of the discovery reached England, the Cardinal-Archbishop of Westminster and his advisers took steps to recover the Martyr's body. The negotiations with the French Authorities resulted in the holy remains being transferred to England under the care of the Rev. Albert Purdie, O.B.E. The special chest made to contain the body was decorated with red and yellow ribbons, the colours of the Municipality of Douay, and upon its arrival at Dover

<sup>1</sup> Contrary to a general opinion, the drawing and quartering did follow the hanging in this case. The Cardinal-Archbishop of Westminster writes: "The medical examination of the body of the Venerable John Southworth, recently providentially restored to our reverent keeping, furnishes proof that is palpable of the awful butchery to which our martyrs were subjected by the will and decree of Elizabeth and her counsellors and their successors."—"Elizabethan Continuity" (Cath. Truth Society).

from Calais, the hearse was conveyed to St Edmund's College, Ware, by road. At 10 o'clock at night, on Tuesday, 20th December, the venerable body was received at the College. Finally, the sacred *reliquiae* of the martyr were, at the end of April, 1930, removed from their temporary resting-place to the Westminster Cathedral, and on Thursday, May 1, of that year, deposited in the Chapel of St George, the imposing function being presided over by His Eminence Cardinal Bourne, Archbishop of Westminster, attended by many bishops and priests, and a very large assemblage of the laity.

JULY 1

PLUNKETT, THE BLESSED OLIVER, ARCHBISHOP  
OF ARMAGH, MARTYR<sup>1</sup>

(1629-1681)

IN his exhaustive *Life* of the Blessed Oliver Plunkett, the late Cardinal Moran, Archbishop of Sydney, has done very much to fill up the *lacunæ* and throw light upon the obscure phases in the history of this, one of the most illustrious victims of the Oates Conspiracy against justice and truth, which darkened the concluding years of Charles the Second's reign. It is certainly strange that the name of the father of the martyred Archbishop is "nowhere mentioned." For unlike very many of the clergy of Ireland, France and some other countries since the Reformation, Oliver Plunkett was not a son of the people, being nearly related on the paternal side to that Christopher Plunkett, Second Earl of Fingall, who, amidst the dissensions which ruined the Catholic Restoration Scheme of the "Provisional Government" of the Old Irish and Anglo-Irish parties in 1642, had held the office of Commissioner for the purpose of "Conferring with all parties in Arms." On his mother's side, Dr Plunkett was closely connected with the Dillons, Earls of Roscommon. He studied, as a boy, the classics under the Hon. and Rev. Patrick Plunkett, brother of Lord Fingall, and subsequently Bishop successively of Ardagh and Meath. At the age of sixteen, Mr Oliver Plunkett was one of five youths who went to Rome in the Suite of the Papal Envoy, the Oratorian Fr. Peter Francis Scarampi, who, during his two years in Ireland (1643-45), had never ceased to urge on the Confederates two points—(a) union among themselves, (b) a continuation of the war with the English Government until complete toleration was obtained.

On their way back to Italy *via* Belgium from Galway, the Envoy and his party were very nearly captured at sea, but whether by the ships of the Parliament then at war with the King, or by the Algerine pirates, who at that time swarmed around the south coasts of England and Ireland, is not certain. Having escaped the sea-rovers, the travellers after landing

<sup>1</sup> The name is often spelt Plunket. The spelling adopted in Cardinal Moran's *Life* of the Martyr, has been followed here.—*Author*.

in the Low Countries were held to ransom by a set of bandits in Flanders—which owing to the demoralization of the Thirty Years War then still raging, was full of roaming troops of ill-disciplined soldiers and bands of outlaws—but a nameless benefactor paid the required ransom, and the much adventured wayfarers were able to proceed.

After arriving at Rome, Mr Plunkett being deemed too young for philosophy, did a year's further study of the classics under Professor Dandoni. He then entered the Irish, or as it was generally styled the Collegio Ludovisi<sup>1</sup> from the munificent Cardinal nephew of Gregory XV, who had richly endowed it with an income and a country house at Castel Gandolfo.

As a student, young Plunkett did extremely well, especially in mathematics and philosophy. He later followed the Canon Law lectures of Dr Mark Anthony Mariscotti at the Sapienza University, and having completed the full eight years course of theological studies, was ordained in 1654. For fifteen years longer, he continued to reside in Rome among the Oratorian Fathers at San Girolamo della Carita, of which his friend Fr. Francis Scarampi was Superior. He also became intimate with Don Benedetto Odescalchi, brother of the Cardinal who, in 1676, succeeded to the Papal Throne as Innocent XI. Dr Plunkett also filled for twelve years the post of lecturer on Controversial and Moral Theology, at the College of the Propaganda. In 1669, he was appointed the agent of the Irish Bishops in Rome, but already the burning question of an Archbishop for the vacant Archdiocese of Armagh was calling for a settlement. In May of that year (1669), Dr Talbot, Archbishop of Dublin, wrote to the Cardinal-Prefect of Propaganda the following: "As no part of Ireland stands so much in need of a proper pastor and primate as the Province of Armagh, in which the clergy are split into factions giving occasion of great scandal not only to the Irish Catholics, but also to the English and Scotch Protestants, who are very numerous in Ulster, I cannot delay acquainting your Eminence with the necessity of promptly nominating an Archbishop for Armagh." The names of Drs Nugent and Everard were proposed and much discussion ensued, when the Pope (Clement IX) cut the matter short by saying: "Why delay in discussing the dubious merits of others while we have here in Rome a native of that Isle whose merits are known to us all . . . let Dr Oliver Plunkett be Archbishop of Armagh." Though he ardently desired to be consecrated in Rome, it was deemed more prudent—so as not to cause offence to the

<sup>1</sup> The Irish or "Ludovisian" College, opened on 1st January, 1629, under the rectorship of Eugene Callanan, Archdeacon of Cashel. Cardinal Ludovisi died 1632. The villa of the family at Rome afterwards passed to the House of Buoncompagni, the heirs of the Ludovisi. Among its priceless art treasures are the colossal head of Juno and the bronze bust of Julius Cæsar, the latter considered one of the best likenesses of that illustrious warrior-statesman.

English Government—that the Archbishop-designate should receive that rite in Belgium, and accordingly the Primate of All Ireland was consecrated by the Bishop of Ghent in his domestic Chapel, on 30th November, St Andrew's Day, 1669. Dr French, Bishop of Ferns, being one of the assisting prelates. It is said that before Dr Plunkett left Rome, a Saintly Polish Priest, Fr. Jerome Mieskow, Prior of the Hospital of Santo Spirito, remarked to him : “ My Lord, you are now going to shed your blood for the Catholic Faith ! ”

Upon arriving in London, the Archbishop was entertained by Fr. Philip Howard—later Cardinal—Chaplain to the Queen, Catharine of Braganza, and after an adventurous journey owing to bad weather and worse roads, his Lordship arrived in Dublin, the end of February, 1670. His near relatives, Sir Nicholas Plunkett and the Earl of Fingall received him with great hospitality. In March following, the Archbishop took formal possession of his See. His arrival almost synchronized with that of the new Viceroy, Lord Berkeley, a nobleman quite friendly to the Catholics. His Lordship himself wrote to several of the clergy advising them to show great prudence and to keep out of political affairs as much as possible, and assuring them of “ every protection.”

Writing a little later to the Pope, Clement X, Dr Plunkett was able to assure his Holiness that the Catholics of Ireland “ enjoy great liberty and ease,” and that “ ecclesiastics may be publicly known, and are permitted to exercise their functions without any impediment.” As a proof of this, may be cited the Jesuit College at Dundalk, where a hundred and sixty boys of the higher class both Catholic and Protestant, were being educated. The new Archbishop was indefatigable. He presided over the general Synod of the Irish Bishops in Dublin (June 1670), held a provincial Council at Clones, and caused schools under the Jesuit Fathers to be opened in his own diocese. He traversed the province regardless of hail, snow and rain, visiting the faithful, and confirming in woods and on the hillside. But the “ Golden Age ” was fast drawing to a close! In 1672, Arthur Capel, Earl of Essex, succeeded Lord Berkeley as Viceroy, and persecution began to sweep away the material part of the good that had been effected. The schools were closed, and Dr Plunkett and the other bishops had literally to “ take to the woods ! ” Indeed, the bishops were ordered by command to leave the kingdom, which of course meant that henceforth their Lordships must remain concealed and administer only by stealth. Dr Plunkett and his companion, Dr Brennan, Bishop of Waterford, suffered great hardships with the rest. “ I sometimes find it difficult to procure even oaten bread,” wrote the Archbishop about this time, “ and the house where I and Dr Brennan are, is of straw and covered or thatched in such a manner that from our bed we can see the stars, and



at the head of our bed every slightest shower refreshes us, but we are resolved rather to die from hunger and cold than to abandon our flocks."

Things continued in that state for several years, but matters became much worse in 1678, the period of the commencement of the "Popish Plot." The secret efforts then being made by the Catholic body in England to obtain toleration—efforts which were not always of the most prudent kind, as the evidence at Edward Coleman's trial revealed—were taken up by Titus Oates and his rivals in perjury, Carstairs and Bedloe, and twisted into a dreadful story turning on the proposed invasion of the Kingdom by a Popish Army, *i.e.*, that of Louis XIV, the filling of all the offices of the State with papists and crowned by the murder of the King! The "Plot" was at once adopted—if it had not been actually engineered—by Lord Shaftesbury, Dryden's "false, dark Achitophel," as a weapon against the Duke of York and the Court, and the blood-stained furore began. The trials, judicial murders and proscriptions which marked its course in England need not be followed here, but in October, 1678, another order banishing all Catholic bishops and other ecclesiastics and religious from Ireland was issued, and it also commanded the instant suppression of all seminaries, schools and religious houses. The Catholic Archbishop of Dublin, Dr Talbot, was arrested, and by 1679, Dr Plunkett was a fugitive, hotly pursued by spies and soldiers, "night and day," as he described it in a letter to Rome. He hid for a while in a lonely spot not far from the Giant's Causeway, and was also kindly sheltered by a Protestant family at Faughart, near Dundalk, but coming to Dublin to attend his cousin, Bishop Patrick Plunkett of Meath, who was dying, he was at length arrested on 6th December, 1679.

Part of the Viceregal policy had been to sow dissensions among Catholics by taking the part of discontented lay people and priests, especially those scandalous ecclesiastics who had been suspended and cast forth for their crimes and immoralities. Such Judases flourish everywhere, notably in times of persecution, when there is everything to lose temporarily by resisting, and so much mundane profit to be gained by playing into the hands of the enemy. There were at this time three wretched creatures of the sort, John MacMoyer, Franciscan, unfrocked for violence, drunkenness and scandalous living, generally; an apostate friar, Anthony Daly, then turned robber, and Edmund Murphy, a suspended secular priest. These worthies now hastened to London and to the willing ear of Shaftesbury described how Dr Plunkett was deep in a conspiracy to transport seventy thousand French troops to Ireland and renew the massacre of 1641! Orders were sent over to Dublin to bring the Archbishop to trial before an entirely Protestant jury. The Duke of Ormonde, the Viceroy, fixed the hearing at Dundalk, in Plunkett's diocese, which

was an advantage to the prisoner who also received, as he himself states, "great courtesy" from the Lord Lieutenant of the County. The case came on for trial on 23rd July, 1680, but none of the three infamous witnesses already named, dared to appear. It is quite likely that at least one of them, Edmund Murphy, had he come forward, would have been ordered into custody by the grand jury and no doubt a little later hanged! In view of all this, the Archbishop should have been at once released, but instead of that, he was sent under guard to Dublin. His Lordship remained there till the end of October, when he was removed to London, still to take his trial on the old preposterous charge. By this time, his slender funds were nearly exhausted, and a sum of £100 of his own which he seems to have received back from Sir Valentine Browne, could not have greatly assisted him. So absurd did the charge against him appear, that the grand jury—though London was full of the "No Popery" spirit—refused to find a bill, which of itself ought to have brought about his discharge. But another panel proved more compliant, and, on 31st May, the Archbishop of Armagh was arraigned at The Old Bailey. No counsel was then allowed persons accused of treason or felony, except to advise on points of law, and Dr Plunkett, of course, had to conduct his own defence.<sup>1</sup> He was allowed six weeks to get his evidence from Ireland, but contrary winds, difficulties of travel and wilful red-tape in Dublin frustrated this, and the necessary testimony did not arrive till three days after the Archbishop's condemnation.

The trial on 8th June, 1681, was one "at Bar," *i.e.*, before three judges, Chief-Justice Sir Francis Pemberton, and Justices Thos. Jones and Wm. Dolben. It is really amazing how Pemberton, who was an acute, learned and independent lawyer, could have even listened to the absurd accusation, and the patently untrue stories told in the witness-box by MacMoyer, and another perjurer, John Maclure, who took the place of the unhappy priest, Edmund Murphy. Murphy at the last minute was seized with remorse, refused to repeat his false accusations against the Archbishop, and was imprisoned in Newgate.<sup>2</sup> Dr Plunkett

<sup>1</sup> Full defence by Counsel in cases of treason was granted by the Act of 1696, but in cases of felony not till 1836.

<sup>2</sup> The infamous John MacMoyer was aided in his villainy by his cousin, Florence MacMoyer, last keeper of the famous *Book of Armagh*, written in 807, and preserved from generation to generation in the MacMoyer Clan. Florence pledged this priceless volume for £5 to pay his expenses to London, presumably to depose against the Archbishop. Even the foreman of the first grand jury which refused to find a true bill against the right reverend prisoner, regarded this "witness" as a knave! He was in fact kept in prison in London, and did not return to Ireland till about 1684. He died at Ballintate, Co. Armagh, an object of universal horror, 12th February, 1713. The Clan MacMoyer were so disgusted by the villainies of this precious pair, John and Florence, that the members changed their name to MacGuire! The *Book of Armagh* eventually came to Bishop Wm. Reeves, who sold it to Trinity College, Dublin, for £200.

defended himself as best he could, but in the absence of his witnesses he was able to do little more than point out the absurdity of the whole story of the prosecution which solemnly alleged that he, a poor man, who could scarcely get £70 a year for his own support, was capable of raising and equipping an army of 70,000 men! Yet the jury after but quarter of an hour, returned a verdict of guilty. After receiving sentence of death, the Archbishop was visited in prison by great numbers of persons, both Catholic and Protestant, and all were impressed by his holiness and obvious innocence. Though Charles had shown much firmness both in resisting the Exclusion Bill for ousting his brother from the succession, and in dissolving the Parliament at Oxford, he dared not now, as he angrily told Lord Essex, "pardon anyone!" The cruel and degrading parts of the sentence, the disembowelling and quartering, were however remitted.

The Archbishop when at Tyburn found the London Catholics there in force, a great act of moral courage in view of the fury aroused by "The Plot" and the terror caused by the martyrdoms still in progress. His Lordship gave the true version of his accusation and condemnation, and then having repeated the *Miserere mei Deus* and other prayers, submitted to his unjust death. As in the case of the Blessed Viscount Stafford, who died the previous December, through the same infamous cause, the crowd around the scaffold is said to have testified its belief in the Archbishop's innocence. While in prison, Dr Plunkett had been attended by Dom Maurus Corker, O.S.B., who did much to relieve those who were suffering for the Faith. The body of the Martyr was interred in St Giles in the Fields, but in 1684, Fr. Corker had it transferred to the English Benedictine Monastery of Lambspring in Bavaria. The Martyr's head and forearms were given to Cardinal Howard in Rome, but in 1721, the head was obtained by Archbishop MacMahon of Armagh, and by him presented to the Dominican Convent, Drogheda, just opened under the care of Rev. Mother Catherine Plunkett, a relative of the martyred Archbishop. It is now preserved in the Blessed Oliver Plunkett Memorial Church in Drogheda. The Martyr's body was transferred to Downside in 1883, during the Priorship of Dr, later H. E. Cardinal Gasquet. Declared Venerable by Leo XIII in 1886, Archbishop Plunkett was Beatified by Benedict XV, 23rd May, 1920, and his name is held in veneration not only in Ireland but wherever English-speaking Catholics are to be found.

[Cardinal Moran : *Memoir of Archbishop Plunkett*. The late Mgr. O'Riordan's articles in *The Catholic Bulletin*, October, 1919—May, 1920, throw much light on the Martyr's College career in Rome. See John O'Connell, LL.D : *The Blessed Oliver Plunkett*, C.T.S., Ireland.]

JULY 6

MORE, ST THOMAS, MARTYR<sup>1</sup>

(1478-1535)

It has been said that it was not until the beginning of the last century that English historians began to write sympathetically about the Maid of Orleans. But with respect to this, the best loved of all the English Martyrs, there does not seem to have ever been among our "separated brethren" a disposition to do anything else than to refer with admiration, and even affection, to the life of the great Lord Chancellor and victim of Henry VIII. Even the mordant Swift classed him as one of "A sextumvirate to which all the ages of the world cannot add a seventh!"<sup>2</sup> The cosmopolitan and somewhat cynical circle of Holland House, re-echoed his praise as it came from the pen and occasionally the lips of his great biographer, Sir James Mackintosh. Macaulay and Cobbett regarded the Sage and Martyr of the Tudor reign of Terror as himself a powerful argument for Catholicism, as indeed he is, and his memory, like that of all which is great and unique, does but enhance with time.

Sir Thomas More was born at Milk Street, Cheapside, London, on 7th February, 1478, the only surviving son of Sir John More, afterwards one of the Judges of the King's Bench. It is related that the mother of the future Chancellor saw before his birth a sort of vision of her illustrious son, bright with splendour! After a preliminary education at St Anthony's School, Threadneedle Street, young More went as page of honour to Cardinal Morton, Archbishop of Canterbury, the Mazarin-like minister of Henry VII, and one of the builders of that Tudor despotism which was under the next reign to transform the largely free realm of England into a western Sultanate! Before More entered Canterbury College, Oxford (since merged into Christ Church), the "Red Fox" of Lambeth Palace had foretold the future distinction of his young servitor. At Oxford, More learned Greek from Thomas Linacre—who in 1517 was to found the College of Physicians. He also perfected himself in Latin, and soon wrote it in the best style of the fast rising "Ciceronianism," which was not the least of the literary achievements of the Renaissance. In 1494, More, according to a custom in vogue, entered New Inn as preliminary to becoming a student at Lincoln's Inn two years later.<sup>3</sup> The young legal tyro studied hard, and followed all the "moots"

<sup>1</sup> Declared Blessed by Leo XIII, December 29, 1886.

<sup>2</sup> *A Voyage to Laputa*, chap. vii., end.

<sup>3</sup> New Inn was one of the "ten lesser Inns" of Chancery, which served as preparatory schools for the Inns of Court up to the end of the sixteenth century. Sir Thomas More, therefore, must have been among the last of the great alumni of these institutions. New Inn was



## SAINT THOMAS MORE

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### THOMAS MORE

Chancellor of England and one of the most holy and learned men of his time, St. Thomas More gave up all the simple things of life, his family, his garden and his beautiful house at Chelsea. He renounced everything for the sake of truth. While he was prisoner in the Tower every effort was made by Henry's men to win his courage, but Thomas remained staunch. Like St. John Fisher he, too, died a martyr's death on Tower Hill.

which then formed part of the forensic curriculum and was called to the Bar before the usual time. He then lectured at Furnival's Inn and so satisfactorily, that he was requested to do so for three years in succession.

The young barrister seems about this time to have passed through a trying experience spiritually, for he seriously thought of relinquishing his profession and becoming a Carthusian. He spent much of his vacation time at the Charterhouse, then under the government of the Saintly Prior Tynbergh. The phase, however, passed, and, in 1505, he married Joan Colte, of Newhall, Essex, by which happy union he had three daughters and one son. Mrs More died in 1511, and very shortly after her death he married again, this time a widow lady, Alice Middleton, seven years older than himself, who, however, proved an excellent wife to him, and a kind stepmother to his young children.

Meantime More was rapidly rising at the Bar, his practice soon brought him in about £5000 a year in present currency. He found time for visits to the Universities of Paris and Louvain, and for correspondence with European scholars like Erasmus, whose friendship he possessed for life. The great Dutchman dedicated to him his *Moriæ Encomium* (*Praise of Folly*), a satire on the ecclesiastical abuses of the day, and a sort of learned play on More's own name and noted love of jesting. The serious side of More's character, as far as public life was concerned, was shown in 1504, when as Member of Parliament, he strenuously opposed a grant of £113,000 demanded by the King (Henry VII) for the marriage of his daughter Margaret with the King of Scots, James IV. As His Majesty's treasury was literally bursting with millions, wrung or cajoled from his subjects in various ways, More's opposition to this preposterous request was a fine piece of patriotism and it was happily successful. In 1515, More, now Sheriff of London, went to Flanders as representative of the City Merchants in a mercantile dispute with their Hanse towns brethren of the Steel-Yard. It was during this episode that he wrote his *Utopia*, published in 1516. Though many of the notions represented in the ideal Republic are truly prophetic, much that its author described about religion and other matters must not be taken seriously. The work was originally in Latin and intended only for the learned and mature. It was translated into English by Raphe Robynson, 1551.

The year that saw the publication of *Utopia*, may be said to have ended More's private, and to have commenced his official, life. He became

also known as the "Inn of Our Lady," from her picture over the entrance. It was a very flourishing place, and was governed by a Treasurer and twelve Ancients, under the general superintendence of the Middle Temple. Like the adjoining Wych Street, it was pulled down about 1900, by the County Council, for the widening of the Strand—an "improvement" very dearly bought by the sacrifice of these two picturesque and historical "bits" of bygone London!

Master of Requests, *i.e.*, examiner of petitions to the King, and so had to attend the Royal Household everywhere. He accompanied the King to the gorgeous meeting of the Field of the Cloth of Gold, and next year became Under-Treasurer of England. In 1523, he was chosen Speaker of the House of Commons, and again showed his courageous spirit by inducing the House, which still retained some sparks of independence, to reject a demand for more money for a war with France, though the requisition was made by the imperious Wolsey in person. It was about this time, that Mr Speaker More moved from Crosby Hall in the City, to the pleasant rural suburb of Chelsea, where fields and orchards touched on the Thames, still at this point a sparkling river, and abounding in "fat and sweet salmons" and trout!<sup>1</sup> More's home-life at Chelsea with his large family, by this time augmented by sons and daughters-in-law, has been often described, and we seem to view the happy scene, hear the discussions on Plato, Livy, and Cicero, smile at the repartee of the "Fool"—this latter a great favourite of More's—not to mention the dry witticisms and Latin epigrams of the great man himself. The King often walked in without ceremony, and though His Majesty would stroll about the garden arm-in-arm with the wisest man in his kingdom, More knew, and once openly said, that if his head could win his sovereign one castle in France, "it should not fail to serve his turn!"

But learned and delightful as the circle at Chelsea was, it never sank to the mere dilettante level of Strawberry Hill. More, notwithstanding the immense labours of his offices at Court and as Speaker of the Commons, saw the dangers of the day, and prepared to grapple with them. The religious and civil confusion caused in Germany by the revolt of Luther—a confusion soon to be intensified by the further contradictions of Tyndale, Zwingli and a score of other "Reformers," brought him forth as a defender of the traditional Faith of Christendom. His *Dialogue*, which appeared in 1528, was an able apology against the innovators, while his *Confutation*—a reply to Tyndale—dealt still more at large with the multifarious heresies which were so soon to undermine the faith of Europe and lay the foundation of much of the present unbelief. The charges of persecution brought against More have been effectively dealt with by his non-catholic biographers, Mackintosh, Dr Gairdner and Canon Dixon. He did indeed once cause a "smutty" urchin to be whipped exactly in the same way and for the same offence that such an offender would be flogged to-day in almost any of our public schools, and on another occasion he had a semi-crazy, but malignly-cunning man, lashed for a very grave offence in Church. The severe laws against heresy in

<sup>1</sup> Harrison's *Description of England*, 1586, p. 46. The last salmon caught in the metropolitan part of the Thames (at London Bridge) was in 1730, though a salmon was found, apparently stranded, in the Mill Pond, Bermondsey, in 1804! See *Memorials for the History of the Parish of Rotherhithe*, by the late Canon E. Josselyn Beck, M.A., Rector.

full force at that time were not of More's making. Later on, as Chancellor, he had occasionally to administer them, but as Mr Hutton observes, "he took especial pains—and for some time successfully—to avoid the infliction of the extreme penalty."<sup>1</sup>

The clergy were not unmindful of More's splendid services to orthodoxy, and "in the name of their Convocation" they pressed upon him a handsome pecuniary gift, but Sir Thomas, though far from rich, declined—with the admirable disinterestedness ever characteristic of him—the proffered reward.

The hateful question of the royal divorce was first sprung upon More by no less a personage than the King himself, with whom in fact the matter originated. In September, 1527, Sir Thomas was at Hampton Court with his Sovereign, when the latter showed him the passages in *Leviticus* and *Deuteronomy* against marriage with a brother's widow. Though Henry urged the Counsellor whose word carried most weight in his dominions, to give an opinion in his—the King's—favour, More, with the prudence that never failed him, declined to be rushed into a hasty judgment, but promised to go further into a matter which was already perplexing half the divines and scholars of the Kingdom.<sup>2</sup>

The dismissal of Wolsey took place on 19th October, 1529, and three days later the Seals were pressed, or rather thrust, upon Sir Thomas. He cherished no illusions about his splendid preferment, coming as it did as a sort of awful contrast to the sudden and ominous fall of the great Lord Cardinal. As Lord High Chancellor, More opened the Parliament of the Spoliation on 3rd November following, and had also to announce later to the members the opinions of the foreign Universities on the divorce. How many, it is to be wondered, knew at that time of the wholesale corruption and even open violence that had been employed to obtain whatever judgments were favourable to that measure? Both in Parliament and the Council, More strenuously opposed the bill to abolish the *Annates* or first-fruits of great benefices to Rome, as also the proposed relaxation of the heresy laws by which measure the King hoped—not to favour Protestants whom he always burnt without mercy—but to embarrass still further and so weaken the authority of the Church. By May, 1532, the situation had become intolerable, and More resigned an exalted dignity which had been none of his seeking, and one which was now evidently intended to be used as an instrument to further the anti-catholic policy of the Crown. As Chancellor, Sir Thomas had dispensed speedy and even-

<sup>1</sup> Rev. W. H. Hutton: *Sir Thomas More* (1895).

<sup>2</sup> The biblical prohibitions referred to, relate to marriages that have been *consummated*, which that of Catharine of Aragon and Prince Arthur had not. It was apparently on this ground that Julius II granted the dispensation. See Blessed John Fisher, June 22.



handed justice to rich and poor alike, and during his tenure of office had cleared off all the arrears of his Court.

The sudden resignation of such a leading light as Sir Thomas, was felt by the King and his sycophants to be a severe and public censure on their whole conduct, and every expedient was now sought after to discredit the man who represented integrity, ability, and wisdom in the highest degree. Vile charges of corruption in his high office were, with amazing effrontery, brought against the upright judge, whose whole judicial conduct had been a shining example to his own and every future age, and one whose resignation of the Seals had actually left him—owing to loss of income and other emoluments—face to face almost with poverty itself ! But the depths of depravity were reached when Sir Thomas was actually accused of having “provoked the King” to write the book on the Seven Sacraments! This was of course the famous work that had been Henry’s joy and pride till, like Solomon, his heart was corrupted by loose women—the epoch-making book which had won for him his jealously-guarded title of “Defender of the Faith” ! More’s reply to the titled tools of tyranny, Cranmer, Audley, Norfolk, and Cromwell, who had the temerity to upbraid him with his “offence,” must have crushed even those servile abettors of insolent oppression. After reminding them that he had but revised the work in question and that, too, at the King’s special desire, he went on to observe that he had in fact reminded the Royal Author that the time might come when he (Henry) and the Pope might fall out over political considerations, and that even the Law of Præmunire might be in case. Whereupon the King exclaimed: “We are so much bounden to the See of Rome, that we cannot do too much honour to it!” Foiled thus far in every direction, the foes of the Ex-Chancellor now sought to involve him in the Bill of Attainder that was being passed against the “Holy Maid of Kent” and her sympathizers. More had, it is true, interviewed “the Maid,” but had expressed no opinion at the time as to her alleged prophecies, contenting himself with advising her not to meddle with politics. Sir Thomas now took the right and courageous course of demanding to address the House on his own behalf, but as nothing would have been worse for Henry than such a defence and from such a source, the tyrant reluctantly consented to remove the name of the man he now undoubtedly feared, from the murder-measure in course of being obsequiously passed by his puppets. Like Fisher, More had all along seen no insuperable objection to swearing to the succession of Anne Boleyn’s offspring to the Throne. But when after the divorce of Catharine, and the adulterous marriage of the King, he was called upon not only to swear to the Succession, but to repudiate “any foreign potentate,” Sir Thomas knew that the spiritual authority of the Apostolic See was now

being aimed at, and he refused the Oath. Efforts were tried to make it appear that he had assented, but Sir Thomas rejected all compromise, and after four days detention with Benson, the schismatical Abbot of Westminster, he was lodged in the Tower. No stone was left unturned to break down the resolution of the illustrious captive. Even the pleading of his favourite daughter, Margaret, who had taken the Oath—"as far as lawful"—and that of his wife, could not force Sir Thomas into a violation of his conscience. In consequence of this, his family was despoiled of its property by the heartless tyrant, so that Lady More had actually to sell her personal belongings to maintain herself as well as her husband, whose prison fees were, as usual then, scandalously high.

As many even of the servile Council were of opinion that the wording of the Succession Act did not remove the spiritual authority of the pope, a bill was passed through Parliament in 1534 abolishing the papal supremacy in England, and making it high treason to maintain the same. Then followed the Conferences of Cromwell, Audley, etc., with Sir Thomas, all designed to entangle him in his words, so as to make out a case for his trial and execution. On 12th June, 1535, Richard Rich, the Solicitor-General, and "one of the most odious names in the history of the age!" had the notorious conversation with More which he, Rich, afterwards perverted and so caused it to be used as the pretext of bringing the Ex-Chancellor to trial on 1st July.<sup>1</sup> More appeared in Westminster Hall prematurely old, worn, and grey, thanks to illness and the rigours of a long imprisonment, but despite all these and other disadvantages, made as might be expected, a most able defence. He denounced in withering words the miserable Rich as a perjurer, and when the pre-arranged verdict of guilty was pronounced, delivered that magnificent address to the Court, the burden of which was that he "had not read in any approved doctor of the Church that a temporal lord could or ought to be the head of the spirituality." The affecting interview between Sir Thomas and his daughter Margaret took place as he was being conducted back to the Tower after receiving sentence of death—that death which he had from the first foreseen, and prepared so well for by prayer and meditation in the solitude of his captivity. His execution on Tower Hill in the morning of 6th July was a tragedy such as this or any other country has seldom witnessed, and it alone would be sufficient to cover Henry and his reign with infamy for all time. The news of the judicial murder sent a thrill of horror throughout Europe, and Courts and Academies vied with one another in de-

<sup>1</sup> What Sir Thomas really said was: "Suppose the Parliament would make a law that God should not be God, would you then say that God were not God! Rich: "No, sir, that would I not, sith no Parliament may make any such law!" "No more," said Sir Thomas (as Rich reported it), "could the Parliament make the King Supreme Head of the Church!"

nouncing Henry as the Nero who had destroyed the Seneca of Christendom! Charles V, who was seldom moved even by tragic occurrences, publicly told the English Ambassador, Sir Thomas Elyot, that rather than have lost such a Counsellor, he would have gladly parted with the fairest city of his dominions! The destruction of Sir Thomas joined to that of Cardinal Fisher, the Monks of the Charterhouse, and other innocent victims, sealed the Tudor Despot as a monster capable of any atrocity—as indeed he was!

In addition to his works already mentioned, Sir Thomas wrote in his captivity, the *Dialogue of Comfort against Tribulation*, and a Treatise on the Passion, unfinished at his death. Apart from his glorious martyrdom, his whole life was as mortified as that of a holy religious, and marked by the tenderest devotion to Our Lord, His Blessed Mother and Holy Church. His invincible humour was that of St Philip Neri, with whom, indeed, he seems to have had much in common, and had the unhappy King not fallen a prey to his own passions, there can be little doubt but that Sir Thomas, Cardinals Fisher and Wolsey, Bishop Tunstall and others of the circle, would have inaugurated that true reform of the English Church *from within*, which was the guiding principle of the Council of Trent, and one which, as far as this country is concerned, would have prepared the ecclesiastical polity of this nation for the vast changes and complex conditions brought about by the New Learning, and the larger freedom rendered inevitable by that event.

[The Canonization of St Thomas More and St John Fisher took place, 19th May, 1935. Pope Pius XI, who had shown great personal interest in the united "causes," delivered a Homily before the Solemn Mass at St Peter's in which he declared the new Saints to be "the leaders and chieftains of that illustrious band of men who from all classes of the people, and from every part of Great Britain, resisted the new errors with unflinching spirit, and in shedding their blood testified their loyal devotedness to the Holy See."]

JULY 6

ST LAWRENCE OF BRINDISI (LORENZO DA BRINDISI)

(1559-1619)

Not even to the greatest Saints has it been often granted to combine in one person the linguistic ability of Cardinal Mezzofanti, the leadership of Peter the Hermit, and the missionary zeal of St Vincent Ferrer! Yet these wonderful gifts and qualities were all salient in St Lawrence of

<sup>1</sup> "The Saga and the Myth of Sir Thomas More," by Professor R. W. Chambers (Oxford University Press), is an original and brilliant study of the Sage and Martyr of the Renaissance who, in the words of this his latest critic, "died because he stood in the path of violence which he was powerless to stop" (p. 50).

Brindisi, who was born at the city of the "Heel of Italy" in 1559. His father Guglielmo de Rossi or Russi, was of the middle rank, as was also his mother, Elizabeth Masella, but what really mattered was, both parents were good, practical Catholics. Their son seems to have been one of those many individuals of genius who, fortunately or unfortunately, never had a childhood in the sense of years of attraction to "the things of a child"—games, amusements and the like. He was placed for his schooling among the Theatine Fathers of Brindisi, where his progress was so rapid that when not much older than six, he was chosen to be the "Boy-Bishop" to preach to the children in Church on the Feast of the Holy Innocents. At the age of twelve, he lost his father, but by this time he was already proficient in Latin, far advanced enough to be able to go to Venice to continue his studies at the Choir-School of the Cathedral of St Mark. When sixteen, he entered the Capuchins, exchanging his baptismal name of Julius to Lawrence, but all during his life much of the courage, ability and firmness of the Roman general and consul, always shone forth from under the habit of the Franciscan Conventuals. His Superiors were not slow to perceive that their latest novice was a youth of exceptional talent. At the University of Padua,<sup>1</sup> where he went to pursue his higher studies, he amazed professors and students alike, though at that time the great Academy of the North of Italy was at the very zenith probably of its fame. Lawrence belonged to the fourth faculty of the University, that of philosophy, and he may have been still studying there, when that peripatetic wonder of the age, the "Admirable Crichton," arrived in 1581 and challenged the whole University, the gage being to confute the traditional interpretation of Aristotle, and expose the errors of the professors of mathematics! A vast undertaking! but one which the amazing young Scotsman is said to have successfully achieved in four days! What Lawrence, if present, thought of this temporary eclipse of the great luminary of the Schools is not recorded. His own talent lay in languages not philosophy, and he is said to have known the text of the Vulgate by heart! as well as to have mastered grammatically, Greek, Hebrew, Arabic and Chaldaic, a marvellous feat in one so young when we consider the terribly verbose and involved grammars in use in those days. Fr. Bellarmine—the future Cardinal—was about this time taking pity on struggling students, and writing for their benefit a simple hand-book to Hebrew, and thereby rendering himself a personal benefactor to every Semitic scholar in Europe.

<sup>1</sup> The University of Padua was founded by Frederick II, 1221. Dr William Harvey (1578-1657), discoverer of the circulation of the blood, was one of its most famous graduates (M.D.), and his coat of arms, emblazoned on the wall of one of the corridors of the medical School, is pointed out as an object of special interest to English and American visitors.

But while amassing philological learning of all kinds, Brother Lawrence did not neglect the true Science of the Saints. He was already remarkable for his piety, especially devotion to the Blessed Sacrament and to the Blessed Virgin, and this, joined to his great facility in discourse, marked him out as a very desirable occupant of the pulpit. While still only a deacon, he was sent to preach the Lenten and other courses at Venice, where the forces let loose by the paganism of the Renaissance and the heresies of Germany and Switzerland, not to mention the demoralizing Franco-Imperial wars of sixty years before, had produced a very unhappy state of affairs. Not only was the Government uncatholic in much of its outlook, but vices such as revenge with its trail of murders, and luxury with its free indulgence in illicit love, made Venice a very fit field for missionary enterprise. Fra Lorenzo left aside that curse of the contemporary pulpit—pedantic quotations and striving after effect. His sermons, clear, solid in matter, and from the heart, went right home, and produced an abundance of good. From Venice he passed through all the chief cities, preaching, confessing, and converting everywhere.

In 1596, he went to live in Rome where his office of Definitor of his Order required his presence. At the request of the Sovereign Pontiff, Clement VIII, he preached courses of sermons in Chaldee to the Jews of the city, great numbers of whom, like another Saint Paul, he "confounded," "affirming that this is the Christ" (*Acts ix. 22*). Indeed, by this time, Fr. Lawrence had become one of the great preachers of Italy, his sermons already filling several folio volumes, and all alike models of their kind. In 1602, he was chosen Vicar-General of his Order, an appellation changed in 1618 by Paul V to that of Minister-General, no doubt to distinguish it from the title of the official of every diocese who exercises jurisdiction in the name of the bishop.

Like their great contemporaries, the Jesuits, the Capuchins were during all this period foremost in every enterprise for the good of souls. Not only in Italy, but all over Europe, the Fathers were to be found actively engaged in every kind of work, from preaching courses of sermons to cooking food for the sick in the hospitals! In 1599, Fr. Lawrence was sent as Missionary Apostolic to Germany to aid in the building up of the Faith in the districts spiritually ravaged by heresy. The result of his labours was the foundation of three Convents of the Order at Vienna, Prague, and Graz respectively, but he actually began his work by nursing the sick during the awful pestilence then decimating the Empire. Like Napoleon during the fateful months that preceded his downfall, the Saint seemed to be everywhere, and in every place his presence secured some new triumph in the way of a fresh foundation, or what, no doubt, he would have considered far better—further conversion of souls to God. In the

very year of his election as Vicar-General, 1602, he made a visitation of the Capuchin Provinces of Northern Italy, France and Spain, and such was his reputation for holiness and consummate ability that his presence in any quarter invariably aroused an interest such as is generally only caused by personages and results connected with startling secular occurrences!

Until John Sobieski's crowning victory over the Turks (1683), an invasion of Europe by the Mohammedans was always something of a probability in Continental politics. The naval triumph at Lepanto scotched but did not kill the menace, and after his accession in 1595, Mohammed III showed his warlike intentions by overrunning and annexing a large part of Hungary. To obtain help from the German Princes the Emperor, Rudolph II, selected as his ambassador the famous Vicar-General of the Capuchins as the one most likely to effect this end. Fr. Lawrence's great diplomatic skill, and his wide knowledge of languages and secular affairs, made him almost an ideal envoy, and very soon not only German but French soldiers were on their way to the threatened outposts of Christendom.

The command of these heterogeneous contingents was entrusted to the Duke of Mercœur, a brave and skilful officer, and Governor of Brittany under Henry IV. But, as so often happens, the Imperialists on the very eve of battle found that garrisons, sickness, death, lines of communication, etc., had so reduced their numbers that not more than 18,000 troops were available to assault the town, Albe Royal (Stuhlweissenburg), then held by 80,000 Turks! Fr. Lawrence attended the Council of War, and he soon communicated his enthusiasm not only to the generals but to the soldiers. "Let the attack," he said, "be made, God would make up for disparity of numbers" Crucifix in hand he rode down the lines, imparting his blessing, and exhorting the regiments to save the Faith and Europe by their heroism. The attack that ensued was like the fierce struggle around Badajos in 1811. Time after time the storming parties mounted to the battlements only to be hurled back into the trenches, while the renowned Turkish artillery, levelled with the most deadly science, carried death and destruction everywhere. Meanwhile, our Saint did more than exhort. Ever foremost amidst the carnage, his presence seemed a host in itself, and though shot fell in showers all around, he remained untouched! At length the city was taken, and its capture must be regarded as one of the greatest military successes of modern warfare. The Turks lost 30,000 men, and though they made a desperate effort to retake the place, they were again defeated—a victory which, under God, was generally attributed to the address and heartening courage of the wonderful Chaplain-General, Fr. Lawrence.

But if Fr. Lawrence had largely saved the Empire by his exertions, he

was to do so still more by his example. He must be regarded as the successor of St Peter Canisius of the preceding century. He had resigned his office of Vicar-General of the Capuchins in 1605, and was, therefore, free to undertake the work of preaching the Faith in Germany, a task which was now entrusted to him by the Holy See. In the pursuance of this object his invariable method was to explain the nature of the doctrine assailed by non-catholics, then to show how this had been obscured by ignorance and misunderstanding, and finally to support his case by copious references to holy Scripture. His unrivalled knowledge of biblical texts always gave him a great advantage, while this fact alone made a great impression on many persons who had been led to believe that Catholics, and especially Catholic priests, knew next to nothing of the Word of God! For a period of eight months he traversed Bavaria, Saxony, and the Palatinate, everywhere confirming his co-religionists, and drawing to the Church large numbers of Protestants who were attracted even more by his personal holiness and amiability than by the obvious learning with which he supported his expositions of the doctrines and practices of the Church.

Not the least of the signal services rendered by this marvellous man to Catholicism, was in connection with the League founded in 1609 by Maximilian of Bavaria for the purpose of banding together the Catholic Princes and Prelates of Germany against the aggression of the Calvinists and their "Evangelical Union." The ruling idea of the Catholic League was to maintain that clause of the Peace of Augsburg (1555) enacting that Bishops and Abbots who became Protestants should not take their temporalities with them, *i.e.*, their estates and revenues, a stipulation which had been constantly violated since that epoch-making treaty had been signed. The Emperor, Rudolph II, now sent Fr. Lawrence as his Ambassador to Madrid to induce the King of Spain, Philip III, one of the leading Princes of the House of Hapsburg, to join the League, and so render it a confederation of international force and authority. This important mission was duly effected, and next year Fr. Lawrence, on his return to Germany, was nominated by the Pope Nuncio at the Court of Maximilian of Bavaria, the Founder of the League as stated above, and by far the greatest of all the potentates who formed the general staff, so to speak, of that influential Union.

The success of the great Capuchin as a diplomatist was fully by this time established over most of Europe, and it is not surprising, therefore, that he should have been selected by the nobility and gentry of Naples as their representative to proceed to Spain to lodge their complaints concerning the Viceroy, Ossuna, before his Most Catholic Majesty. Naples had long been the Ireland of Spain, and ever since 1547, when

the people rose up against the establishment of the Inquisition—as that institution was understood south of the Pyrenees—there had been periodic tumults and almost continual unrest. The moving spirit of the Neapolitans at this period was the Dominican Tomaso Campanella, a kind of Savonarola—an “audacious Titan of the modern world”—who seems to have kept the Faith in spite of communistic treatises like his *Civitas Solis*. Such a mission as this was very distasteful to Fr. Lawrence, who, worn out with labours, was seeking at this time some repose in the Monastery of Caserta. True to his generous principle of never refusing any work that was really for the popular good, he consented to go to Philip III, though assured that his own death was at hand. He was graciously received by the King, at whose initiative the whole matter of complaint was gone carefully into and the causes of offence removed. The Court was then sojourning at Lisbon which, with Portugal, had been annexed to Spain in 1580, and it was in the city of St Anthony of Padua that the Saint was seized with his last illness. He predicted the exact day of his death, and having received with fervent piety the last Sacraments, this great servant of God and the Church departed this life on 22nd July 1619.

From this brief and imperfect sketch it might be gathered that this great light had been raised up merely to shine in the purely public life of the Church of his age. But, as before remarked, Fr. Lawrence was, above all things, a man of God. His devotion to Our Lord's presence in the Blessed Sacrament was such that he often went into ecstasies when saying Holy Mass or even when praying before the Altar. His love of Our Lady, too, found expression not only in constant devotion to her, but also in several beautiful hymns, and his favourite form of benediction was : “May the Blessed Virgin with her Holy Child bless us.” His copious writings in Latin and Italian fill eight folios, and many of his controversial treatises are enriched by full quotations in the original from the Latin and Greek Fathers. The Beatification of this eminent labourer in the spiritual vineyard did not take place till 1783 (Pius VI), and his Canonization was almost equally protracted, not being finally achieved till 8th December, 1881, when Leo XIII enrolled Lawrence of Brindisi among the Saints.

[The great sources for details of this strenuous and holy life, are the *Annales* of the Capuchin Order, vol. iii., the Lyons edition, 1676. Many other items bearing on the Saint and his times are to be found in such works as Alzog's *Church History*, vol. iii. and Guggenberger's *General History of the Christian Era*, vol. ii.]



JULY 81

## FORTESCUE, THE BLESSED SIR ADRIAN, MARTYR (1476-1539)

AMONG the paladins of the Conqueror who won fame and fortune with Duke William at Hastings was a doughty Norman knight, Richard le Fort, whose massive kite-shaped shield—*son Fort Écu*—saved the Conqueror's life, and with it the whole actual future of English history, when a Saxon battle-axe was within an ace of ending the one and changing the other for ever! Richard of the Fort Écu, soon to be Fortescue, founded a great family, whose chronicles are interwoven with the annals of the nation ever since the days of Sir John Fortescue, who wrote the *De Laudibus Legum Angliæ*, down to our own.

Sir Adrian, grand-nephew of the famous Chief-Justice and author of the *De Laudibus*, was the second son of Sir John Fortescue of Ponsborne, Hertfordshire. His mother, Alice Boleyn, was great-aunt of Henry VIII's fatal enchantress and second Queen, a fact which of itself was sufficient later on to bring the subject of these remarks into close association with the Tudor Court with its uncertain favours and certain dangers! Sir Adrian married, some time before 1499, Anne Stonor, daughter of Sir Wm. Stonor of Henley-on-Thames, ancestor of the present Lord Camoys. For one of such ancient lineage and so highly connected as was Sir Adrian, the facts of his early life are singularly meagre. He was created a Knight of the Bath in 1503, and ten years later was present with Henry VIII at the famous stampede of French Knights and Squires known as the Battle of the Spurs. In 1517, he was a Gentleman of the King's Privy Chamber and in that capacity waited upon His Highness's Grace at the great banquet at Greenwich on 7th July of that year, when 250 young lords and gentlemen did suit and service to their Majesties, Cardinal Wolsey, and the "Embassadors" of the Empire, France, Aragon and Venice—a dazzling concourse of magnates. As all these waiting-gentlemen were bidden to "be ready to serve the lords and ladies with drink!" Mr Punch's Irish impromptu waiter had a precedent for his famous blunder anent the "dhrink," which so greatly shocked the titled aunt of the expectant genteel family in the forties of last century!

In the following June, Sir Adrian lost his first wife, and her funeral which, with mortuary pomp and largesse to the poor, cost £425 in present currency, gives one a good insight into the lavish ostentation of this "spacious" age even over its dead! Four years later, the Knight was on the seas with the Lord High Admiral, Thomas Howard, Earl of Surrey, raiding the coasts of Brittany and burning villages—all such "dis-

pleasures " being part of that futile war which wasted the nation's treasure, caused misery to countless humble folk abroad, and of course made the grasping King cast longing eyes on the riches of the Church. In 1530, Sir Adrian married Anne, daughter of Sir Wm. Reade of Boarstall, Bucks, by whom he had three sons, one of whom was the upright and scholarly Sir John, Privy Councillor under Elizabeth, and her tutor in Latin and Greek. Two years later, Sir Adrian was enrolled among the Knights of Malta as a Knight of Devotion, by Sir William Weston of Sutton Place by Guildford, the Prior of the Order in England. From about this time his life ceases to be connected with Court service or wars on land and sea, and is devoted to his own domestic affairs, including a lawsuit with his relative, Sir William Stonor. What precisely caused Sir Adrian to fall under the displeasure of the Tudor Tyrant—though that was a circumstance by no means difficult to bring about!—is not clear, but in February, 1539, he was in the Tower, and charged with "diverse and sundrie detestable and abhominable treasons!" No doubt he had refused the Oath of Supremacy, which surmise is the more certain as in the May following, he was included in the Bill of Attainder which the English Divan—once known as the Parliament of the Realm—passed at the imperious bidding of the Tudor Sultan. The new method of murder by Act of Parliament, which by the just retribution of Providence destroyed the following year its devisor, Thomas Cromwell, also enmeshed in its deadly folds the Venerable Countess of Salisbury, her sons and others. The exact date of Sir Adrian's martyrdom on Tower Hill is unknown. The chronicles of the Grey Friars say the beheading was on 9th July. The English Martyrology gives 8th July as the day. With him also perished Sir Thomas Dingley.

From the first, Sir Adrian was regarded as a martyr by the Knights of Malta, and his pictures displaying the palm and aureola of martyrdom are treasured in the Church of St John at Valetta and in the College of St Paul at Rabata. Among the few relics of the martyr extant, the most prominent is a missal used by him, and now (or lately) in the possession of his descendant, Miss Fortescue Turville of Husbands Bosworth. Sir Adrian Fortescue was Beatified by Leo XIII, 13th May, 1895, together with Thos. Percy, Earl of Northumberland, and the Benedictine Abbots of Colchester, Glastonbury and Reading.

JULY 9

VERONICA DE JULIANIS, ST

(1660-1727)

THOUGH God is wonderful in his Saints in all ages and places, there is a natural disposition to associate certain types of sanctity with particular epochs, perhaps from the fact that the special wants of the Church, and of souls, which are so largely brought about by the circumstances of the time, call for persons adapted to meet these difficulties, and by the help of divine grace to overcome them. Veronica Giuliani would seem to be one of those whose days we might expect to find contemporary, or nearly so, with St Gertrude, Juliana of Norwich, Richard Rolle, and other great mystics of the Middle Ages, for from her cradle to her grave, her life was marked by wonders recalling those of the Saints of the epoch of Faith. Born at Mercatillo, in the Duchy of Urbino, Italy, 1660, the daughter of Francesco Giuliani and Benedetta Mancini, citizens of the town and persons of the rank of gentlefolk, she received the name of Ursula at her baptism. The prodigies that marked her life are said to have commenced when she was six months old! for after pronouncing the name of the Blessed Trinity, at that tender age, she left her mother's lap and walked with a firm step. A year later, she reproved a shopman who was giving a false measure of oil with the words: "Be just! God sees you!" Like nearly all the Saints, her love for the poor commenced with her early childhood. She was not content merely with feeding the hungry and giving drink to the thirsty, but after the example of St Francis of Assisi, St Martin of Tours and others, even gave away portions of her own clothing to relieve the necessitous. From about the age of eleven, the subject of Our Lord's Passion began to absorb her religious attention, though of course, this did not exclude a tender devotion to the Blessed Virgin or the other spiritual exercises which had been part and parcel of her life for several years.

But as the first victories of all who strive not merely after perfection but to lead a life of ordinary goodness, must be over themselves, so it was with our Saint. Joined to this love of Our Saviour, His Blessed Mother, and so much else that was holy, was unfortunately a dictatorial spirit which made Ursula inclined to criticize adversely all those who did not manifest the same eagerness for the devotions which so strongly appealed to herself. This unfortunate trait is believed to have been largely cured through a vision which she had when about sixteen years of age, in which she saw her heart represented as a piece of steel! She also later accused herself of much false complacency about the time that her father was

appointed Intendant of Finance at Piacenza. As mere pleasure at temporal prosperity is not a sin, this self-satisfaction must in this case have amounted to a species of vanity, not unmixed perhaps with a certain share of contempt for others, for Veronica happily does not appear to have been at all afflicted by scruples. Indeed, her strong common sense shines out conspicuously through all her life, and as we shall see, she was in fact strong minded and practical not only in what pertained to devotion, but also in matters of everyday routine.

In the excellent biographical summary of the life of St Veronica Giuliani given in the Supplement of the Breviary for July, it is stated that she was as a child, favoured with familiar intercourse with Our Lord and His Holy Mother, and that on one occasion, during a vision of the Blessed Virgin, the Saint vowed herself to the religious state. The accomplishment of this dedication was not fulfilled without much difficulty, for her father, who, as we have seen, had risen in the world, wished her to marry. Not only that, but even after the manner of Continental parents, he went out of his way to find what were, from the traditional and practical points of view, highly eligible suitors for his daughter's hand! But Ursula had already pledged herself to One above, and her refusal of an earthly espousal aroused much opposition at home. The result of this was that she became very ill, when her father seeing how bent she was on a life in the cloister, refused, like a good Catholic, to stand any longer in the way of what was clearly a true vocation, and he consented, though reluctantly, to his daughter entering a convent. In 1677, when she was seventeen years of age, Ursula was accepted as a novice at the Convent of the Poor Clares in Citta di Castello. Her devotion to the Passion of our Lord led her to select, in religion, the name of Veronica from that holy and heroic matron, Berenice, who, braving the Jewish mob and the rough Roman soldiers, forced her way through the tumult to our Lord on the way to Calvary, and wiped the sweat and blood from His dust-stained and swollen countenance. There was already something about Sister Veronica, as she now was, which distinguished her from the rest of the community, for at the conclusion of the ceremony of her reception, the Bishop remarked to the Abbess privately: "I commend this new daughter to your special care, for she will one day be a great Saint!" The way of transgressors is said to be hard. The way of those who strive to be perfect, most certainly is. From the first, Sister Veronica embraced the austere life of the Poor Clares in the very spirit in which it had been founded, and to the severities of the Order—the long fasts, vigils and silence—she added others of her own. These were chiefly a variety of humiliations with a view of abasing herself in the eyes of others, and also the resolution of accepting cheerfully and thankfully the trials which God

might be pleased to send her. Some of the latter came in the form of being misunderstood. Her life of holiness and mortification was for a time ascribed to worldly reasons—spiritual pride among them—and she was in consequence treated with much additional severity by her Superiors, though we think we may be pardoned for more than suspecting that all this was really with a view of “drawing out” the full wealth of holiness hidden in this elect soul.

In 1678 she was professed, and among the spiritual bouquets offered to Our Lord on this occasion by her was the expressed desire of suffering with Him for the conversion of sinners. It is said that, at this time, she was favoured again with a vision of Our Saviour carrying the Cross, and it was also during this period that she began to feel acute pain over her heart, and after her death the form of a cross was found impressed upon it. Other marks of the stigmata were vouchsafed in 1694 in the shape of the impression of the Crown of Thorns, which brought with it great and permanent pain. In order that all doubt as to the supernatural nature of this might be removed, the Bishop of the diocese ordered her to have a course of medical treatment, but no cure was the result. All this time, Sister Veronica was carrying out the very difficult duties of Mistress of Novices, and though she herself must be classed as a “mystic,” she was very practical in her method of guiding those under her care. It is remarkable that she would never allow any of the novices to read books on Mystical Theology, a precaution which may have arisen from the fact that at that time a great many books professing to treat of that difficult subject, were neither more nor less than Jansenist publications, open or disguised! The greatest circumspection was required to sift the chaff from the wheat, and it was to reading, as a youth, one of these pernicious works, that St John Baptist de Rossi was wont to ascribe the attack of scruples which troubled him for so many years. She became Abbess of her house in 1716, and it is recorded as a proof of her practical good sense and forethought, that she not only caused a better system of water-pipes to be laid in to the convent, but also had the place enlarged, and other improvements of the kind effected. Towards the end of her life she was afflicted with apoplexy, and this complaint, which is regarded as almost the most severe of all diseases, at length proved fatal to her on 9th July, 1727. She was declared Blessed by Pius VII, and in 1839 was Canonized by Gregory XVI on the same day as saw the great Doctor of the Church, Alphonsus Liguori, enrolled among the Saints. St Veronica de Julianis is one of the Saints of the mystic life, and of intense interior suffering, and she is generally portrayed as crowned with thorns and bearing the cross.

JULY 17

THE CARMELITE NUNS OF COMPIEGNE,  
BLESSED, MARTYRS

(1794)

THOUGH a vast number of persons were done to death during the French Revolution out of hatred of religion, it is perhaps something more than a coincidence that two of the most dramatic tragedies in the names of "Liberté, Egalité and Confraternité" should have been in connection with the Carmelite Order. The first of these was the terrible massacre of the clergy in the garden of the Carmes—the enclosure of the old Carmelite Monastery, Paris—when the Venerable Archbishop of Arles, the Bishops of Beauvais and Saintes, and over two hundred priests and others were shot, sabred or piked by the Jacobin yahoos on the 2nd of September, 1792. The second pathetic occurrence is that which forms the subject of the following narrative.

After the suppression of the religious Orders in France, 13th February, 1790, the Carmelite nuns of Compiègne—the town for ever associated with the capture of St Jeanne D'Arc by the Burgundians in May, 1430—still endeavoured to continue, as well as circumstances would permit, their Community life of prayer and mortification, and it is possible that the Sisters might have escaped, at least with their lives, if it had not been for what in happier times would have been an incident of no special importance. In June, 1794, the nuns were all arrested, presumably for contravening the law of the "Republic, one and indivisible," against religious orders, and also for having refused, so it seems, the schismatical Oath of the "Civil Constitution of the Clergy."<sup>1</sup> They were all incarcerated in the common prison, by this time full of "royalist" prisoners, including whole families of suspected persons, brought in from the various towns and villages of the district. Among these interesting captives were sixteen English nuns of the Benedictine Convent of Cambrai, which had been founded in 1625, chiefly through the instrumentality of Dom William Barlow and Dom William Benet Jones, both monks of the same Order. The Abbess of the nuns at this time was Dame Mary Lucy Blyde,<sup>2</sup> then (1794) sixty-five years of age, and both she and her Sisters in religion,

<sup>1</sup> Or the trouble may have been over the oath concerning "Egalité," which at that time had an erroneous significance as regards the Church, and was condemned by many of the bishops.

<sup>2</sup> Dame Mary Lucy Blyde, O.S.B., last Abbess of Cambrai, was born at Penistone, Yorkshire, 1729, and succeeded Abbess Mary Clare Knight, on the death of the latter, 30th October, 1792. The nuns, after enduring a most rigorous imprisonment, were liberated, 24th April, and arrived in London on 4th May, 1795. They were hospitably entertained by the Duke and

long afterwards in England, carried with them cherished memories of the saintly Community whose imprisonment, but not whose martyrdom, it had been their lot to share.

The Carmelite nuns had not long been in the prison, when orders came down to remove the whole Community to Paris for trial before the Revolutionary Tribunal. Some very interesting, and indeed valuable, details were preserved by their Benedictine fellow-prisoners of the last days of the doomed Carmelites at Compiègne, as well as of the "saint-like manner" of their departure. "We saw them embrace each other before they set off," wrote one of the English nuns, "and they took an affectionate leave of us by the motion of their hands and other friendly gestures." (*Cath. Record Society*, vol. xiii., *Miscellanea*, p. 30).

The circumstances that led to the transfer of the Carmelite nuns to Paris was a letter to one of the Sisters written by an emigrant priest who had formerly been chaplain to the convent. In this letter a bishop, also an *émigré*, desired to convey his compliments to an old gentleman, cousin of one of the nuns, and a man by all accounts of considerable property. Corresponding with *émigrés* had lately been made a capital offence in France, and this appears to have been the principal cause that started the prosecution which was to end in the destruction of this holy Community.

Upon their arrival in Paris, the nuns were placed in the Conciergerie, the gloomy prison which some nine months before, the hapless Marie Antoinette had left for the guillotine. The nuns entered the capital during the last but most awful throes of the Terror, when the Committee of Public Safety and its Attorney-General, Fouquier-Tinville, were hurrying before the Revolutionary Tribunal and thence to the scaffold scores of persons daily. The "trials" of these unhappy victims were of course mere mockeries, the very fact of possessing an "aristocratic" name, or even of having been associated in any way with the fallen social order, being quite sufficient to ensure anyone's death. It is not easy to state precisely the exact nature of the accusations that brought about the martyrdom of the Carmelite Community. On 16th July, 1794, the Mother Superior and her daughters in religion, sixteen in all, were arraigned before the Revolutionary Court. Leaving out of count that general hatred of religion which was at the bottom of nearly all the violence of the Jacobins, the charges brought against the Community were their having refused the Civil Oath of the Clergy or the other oath referred to,

Duchess of Buckingham, and soon settled at Woolton, near Liverpool. In 1807, the nuns migrated to Salford Hall, near Evesham, and it was there that Abbess Blyde died, 12th August, 1816. Finally, in 1838, the Community purchased Stanbrook Hall, Worcestershire, where it has since remained. The first wing of the present monastery was completed in 1880.

and having remained together in common life after the promulgation of the law abolishing religious Orders in France. To these was added another "offence," curious indeed, but one exceedingly valuable both from the point of view of the future cause of beatification of those nuns, and of devotional history generally. Shortly before his deposition, the pious, but irresolute, Louis XVI had signed a *décret* consecrating his distracted Kingdom to the Sacred Heart. Adherence to this "fanatical and royalist cult" was now made a serious accusation against the nuns, upon whom the inevitable sentence of death was passed, the whole Community receiving their long-expected fate with a happy serenity that astonished even the hard-hearted Judges and officials of the Court, as well as the blood-stained sans-culottes who crowded the galleries. On the 17th of July, the Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, the Patroness of the Order, that blessed band went forth to death. As they left the Conciergerie, the nuns began to chant the *Salve Regina*, to which, as the cortege passed through the streets, the Litany of Our Lady and other pious hymns and anthems were added. This wonderful constancy produced a most awe-inspiring effect, even the *tricoteuses*—the horrible hags who usually surged around the guillotine gloating over the victims—being for once hushed to silence at the sight of this sublime tragedy. The Mother Prioress, having, like the mother of the Maccabees, witnessed the deaths one by one of her spiritual children, submitted to the knife with the same Christian and heroic fortitude that had characterized the rest of the Community on this, surely not the least, glorious day in the historic annals of the ancient Church of France!

The bodies of the martyred Carmelites were thrown together into a sand-pit at Picpus, but their noble and resigned bearing, as well as their obvious guiltlessness of any crime, had made a deep impression. The echoes of the dying anthems and the vision of the stately dignity of the Sisters seemed to haunt the very scene of their death, and to impart a sacred atmosphere to the place of execution, the Barrier de Trône in the Faubourg St Antoine.<sup>1</sup>

By a dispensation of Providence, one of the nuns was absent at the time the rest of the Community was removed to Paris. She kept herself concealed till the 28th of July, twelve days after her Sisters in religion had gone to their glorious death, after which time she was safe, for on that day (28th July, 1794) the monster Robespierre and twenty of his abettors perished on the scaffold, and the Terror automatically almost, came to an end. This good Sister used frequently to visit the English

<sup>1</sup> Alison: *History of Europe*, iv., chap. xv. The historian, however, appears to be in error in one respect, for he describes the martyred Community as "the whole of the Nuns of the Abbey of Montmartre."



Benedictine nuns during the last months of their imprisonment at Compiègne. She gave them the names of her martyred Sisters as follows:—

Sœur Croissi (Croissy)	aged 49
„ Trozelle (Trezel)	„ 51
„ Haunisset (Hanisset)	„ 52
„ Le Doine (Ledoine) <i>Prioress</i>	„ 42
„ Pellerat (Pelras)	„ 34
„ Piede Court	„ 78
„ Brudeau (Brideau)	„ —
„ Brard	„ 58
„ Chrétien	„ 52
„ Dufour	„ —
„ Meuniere (Maunier)	„ 29
„ Soiron	„ 55 <sup>1</sup>
„ Soiron	„ 45 <sup>1</sup>
„ Roussel (Roussel)	„ 52
„ Vezolat (Vérolot)	„ 30
„ De la Neuville	„ 53

Some of the clothes and shoes left behind in the prison by the Carmelites when they were taken to Paris, were given by the Mayor of the town to the Benedictines partly to supply the want of habits, etc., which had by that time, become very acute. Some of these precious relics are treasured at Stanbrook Abbey (Worcestershire), the modern representative of the old Benedictine Convent of Cambrai, and together with the written account of the English Sisters of what took place during those poignant days in the summer of 1794, were of much value when the process of the martyred nuns was introduced at Rome, March 21, 1896. They were Beatified, 27th May, 1906.

The Carmelite Nun who escaped death, and who supplied the names of her martyred Sisters to the imprisoned Benedictines, was Sister Mary of the Incarnation. She was still living in 1814 in Compiègne, with a few pious women, under the severe Carmelite rule, but apparently without formal Canonical approbation.

[*Catholic Record Society*, vol. viii., *Miscellanea*, pp. 25-38. J. Harwood Hill: *Chronicle of the Christian Ages*, vol. ii. (Uppingham, 1859.).] Wilson: *The Martyrs of Compiègne* (1907). Private information.

<sup>1</sup> Catherine and Theresa Soiron were servants of the Convent and not Religious.

JULY 6-26

THE NUNS OF ORANGE, FRANCE, BLESSED, MARTYRS  
(1794)

ON 11th May, 1794, the Committee of Public Safety, then holding its Session in Paris, sent at the request of the "Citizen" Mignet, a Commission of Five to Orange, both to propagate the principles of the Revolution in the Departments of the Bouches-du-Rhône and Vaucluse, and also to arraign all persons suspected of anti-republican principles. The "Court" thus constituted, opened at Orange on 19th June, and continued to try and sentence "offenders" till the 4th of August, when the reign of Terror virtually ended. In less than two months, this ferocious tribunal sentenced more than 332 persons to death! Among these victims were thirty-two nuns of various Orders, all of whom showed, both during their captivity, trials and martyrdoms, the saintly devotion and admirable courage manifested by such contemporary martyr Communities as the Carmelites of Compiègne, the Ursulines of Valenciennes and the Sisters of Charity at Arras. The nuns while in prison followed as far as their awful circumstances would permit, a rule of religious life, rising at five in the morning, reading the prayers for Mass and later, at eight o'clock, meeting together for the recitation of the litanies of Our Lady and the Saints. At nine o'clock some of the number were summoned before the Tribunal, the rest meanwhile invoking the Holy Ghost to help their Sisters to bear the ordeal bravely, and to meet the inevitable sentence of death—and its execution the same day!—in the spirit of the martyrs of old.

When the noise in the streets at six o'clock told the survivors that all was over, and that the crowns had been won, the daily diminishing, but none the less unconquerable, band of heroines used to chant the *Te Deum* and the *Laudate Dominum omnes gentes!* The courageous replies and deportment of some of the nuns have been recorded. Thus, when asked by one of the Republican Judges if she were not afraid, Sister Loye replied: "I only fear God, and I don't consider myself worthy of martyrdom." Sister Dubac declared: "I am a nun, and I shall be one till death!" Sister d'Alauzier kissed the guillotine on ascending the scaffold, while Sister Marie Cluse remarked to the executioner: "Do your duty. I want to sup with the Angels." "We owe more to our judges than to our parents," said Marie Madeleine de Justamond, "for our parents only gave us our earthly lives, while the judges have given us eternal ones!" This holy band of religious, it need scarcely be said, died through refusing the schismatical Oath of the Civil Constitution of the Clergy, and out of the general hatred of religion inculcated by the

Revolution. Fifty-five nuns were arrested of whom thirty-two, as stated, were put to death. Fifteen were not tried, seven were sentenced to imprisonment and only one acquitted!

The Sisters put to death were :

1. Suzanne Agathe de Loye (Sœur Marie Rose), O.S.B. Born, 1741. Executed, Sunday, 6th July.

2. Francoise Gabrielle Marie Suzanne de Gaillard (Sœur Iphegenia of St Matthew) of the Sacramentine Convent of Bollène. Born, 1761. Executed, 7th July.

3. Marie Anne Madeleine de Guilhermier (Sœur St Mélainie), Ursuline. Born 1733. Executed, 9th July.

4. Marie Anne Marguerite du Rocher (Sœur des Anges), Ursuline of Bollène. Born 1755. Executed, 10th July.

5. Marie Gertrude de Ripert D'Alanzier (Sœur St Sophie), Ursuline, Bollène. Born 1757. Executed, 10th July.

6. Sylvie Agnes de Romillon (Sœur Agnes de Jesus), Ursuline of Bollène. Born, 1750. Executed, 10th July.

7. Rosalie Clotilde Bès (Sœur St Pélagie), Sacramentine Convent, Bollène. Born 1753. Executed, 11th July.

8. Marie Elizabeth Pélessier (Sœur Théotiste), Sacramentine Convent, Bollène. Born 1741. Executed, 11th July.

9. Claire Blanc (Sœur St Martin) Sacramentine of Bollène. Born 1742. Executed, 11th July.

10. Marie Marguerite de Berbegie d'Albarède (Sœur St Sophie), Ursuline of the Convent of Pont-St-Esprit. Born 1740. Executed, 11th July.

11. Marie Madeleine<sup>1</sup> — (Sœur Rose de St Xavier), Sacramentine of Bollène. Born 1746. Executed, 12th July.

12. Marie Cluse (Sœur Marthe de Bon Ange) Sacramentine of Bollène. Born 1761. Executed, 12th July.

13. Marguerite Éléanore de Justamond (Sœur Marie de St Henri), Cistercian of St Catherine's Convent, Avignon. Born 1746. Executed, 12th July.

14. Jeanne Marie de Romillon (Sœur St Bernard), Ursuline Convent of Pont-St-Esprit. Born 1753. Executed, 12th July.

15. Elizabeth Verchère (Sœur Madeleine de la Mère de Dieu), Sacramentine of Bollène. Born 1769. Executed, 13th July. The two following were of the same Convent.

16. Thérèse Henriette Fauril (Sœur de l'Annunciation). Born 1770. Executed, 13th July.

<sup>1</sup> Surname half erased on the printed account.

17. Andrée Anne Minutte (Sœur St Alexis). Born 1740. Executed, 13th July.

18. Marie Anne Lambert (Sœur St Francois), Ursuline of Bollène. Born 1742. Executed, 13th July.

19. Marie Anne De Peyre (Sœur St Francoise), Ursuline of Carpentras. Born 1756. Executed, 13th July.

20. Marie Athenase de Roquard (Sœur St Gervais), Superior of the Ursulines of Bollène. Born 1749. Executed, 13th July.

21, 22, 23. Three Sacramentine nuns executed, 16th July, viz.:

(a) Marguerite Rose de Gordon (Sœur Aimée de Jesus). Born 1733.

(b) Marguerite Thérèse Charrousol (Sœur Marie de Jesus). Born 1758.

(c) Marie Anne Béguen-Royal (Sœur St Joachim. Born 1736.

24, 25, 26. Three Ursuline nuns also executed on the same day, viz.:

(a) Marie Anne Doux (Sœur St Michel). Born 1739.

(b) Marie Rose Laye (Sœur St André). Born 1728.

(c) Dorothée Madeleine Julie de Justamond (Sœur de Cœur de Marie). Born 1743.

27. Madeleine Francoise de Justamond, Sister of the last-mentioned (Sœur Madeleine du St Sacrement), Cistercian of St Catherine's Abbey at Avignon. Born 1754. Executed, 17th July.

28. Marguerite Bonnet (Sœur St Augustine), Sacramentine of Bollène. Born 1719. Executed, 26th July.

29. Marie Madeleine de Justamond (Sœur Catherine de Jesus), Ursuline of Pont-St-Espirit. Born 1724. Executed, 26th July.

30. Anne Cartier (Sœur St Basile), Ursuline. Born 1733. Executed, 26th July.

31. Marie Claire Dubac (Sœur Claire de St Rosalie), Ursuline of Bollène. Born 1727. Executed, 26th July.

32. Elizabeth Thérèse Consolin (Sœur du Cœur de Jesus), Ursuline of Sisteron. Born 1736. Executed, 26th July.

The above Sisters were declared Blessed by Pope Pius XI, 1925.

[*Les 32 Religieuses Guillotinées à Orange*, Par l'Abbé Redon. (Aubanel, éditeur, Avignon.)]

JULY 27

## THE BLESSED MARTYRS OF CUNCOLIM

(1583)

THIS is the general title of five members of the Society of Jesus who died for the Faith at the village of Cuncolim, Salcete, Goa, India, on 25th July, 1583. The names of the Martyrs are: Fathers Rudolph Acquairva (Aquaviva), Alphonsus Pacheco, Peter Berno and Anthony Francis Aranha, a lay brother. Rudolph Acquaviva was the son of the Duke of Atri, and was born at the latter place, 2nd October, 1550 (Sommervogel: *Bibliothèque*, says 1557). He entered the Society, 2nd April 1568 (1577—Sommervogel), and sailed for the East Indies, 13th September, 1578. His first years in India were passed as special Envoy at the Court of the Great Mogul, Akbar. After three years he was recalled, much to the regret of the Imperial Court, and nominated Superior of the Salcete Mission, where he remained till his tragic death. The place was a stronghold of paganism, much reverence being paid there to a Sacred Cow and also to an Ant-hill! On 15th July, 1583, Fr. Rudolph and the above-named met at Orlim, and proceeding to Cuncolim began taking steps for the erection of a Cross and Church. This, and the fact that several of their pagodas had lately been destroyed, greatly exasperated the people of the place, who gathered together in arms, and made an onslaught upon the missionaries. Goncalo Rodrigues, one of the number, would have discharged a musket at their assailants, but was checked by Fr. Pacheco with the words: "We are not here to fight!" The natives then fell upon the party with swords and lances. Fr. Rudolph was mortally wounded by a scimitar, and expired pronouncing the Holy Name, and the rest except Brother Aranha, were also slain, with many wounds. The Brother was taken prisoner, and refusing to pay homage to an idol was, like St Sabastian, tied to a tree and pierced with arrows. The place of this martyrdom is marked by a cross, which was carefully restored in 1885. The bodies of the Martyrs after several translations, now repose in the Cathedral of Old Goa.

The companions of Fr. Rudolph, as stated above were:

1. Alphonsus Pacheco (1551?—1583), born in New Castile. Entered the Society, 8th September, 1567. Arrived at Goa, September, 1574. Returned to Europe on business of the Society, 1578, and came back to India, 1581.

2. Peter Berno, a Swiss, born about 1550 at Ascova. Entered the Society, 1577, and went to Goa, 1579. Though he converted many

Hindoos, he used to say that little real progress would be made until Christian blood had been shed for the Faith.

3. Anthony Francis. This Father was a Portuguese and had studied at Coimbra. He entered the Society 1571. He was accustomed to pray daily for the grace of martyrdom, and it is said that while elevating the Sacred Host at Mass on one occasion, he was supernaturally informed that his prayer was answered.

4. Francis Aranha. Jesuit lay brother. came of a noble family of Braga, Portugal. He entered the Society, 1571, and being a very skilful architect, was usefully employed in and around Goa in the erection of churches and chapels.

Fr. Charles Sommervogel in his *Bibliothèque de la Compagnie de Jesus*, informs us that an account of the above martyrdoms was given in the letter addressed to Nunnus Rodericus, Rector of Goa, and published in Algambe's *Mortes Illustres*.

The cause of the Martyrs was commenced in 1600, but was still pending in 1720, for in that year, according to our informant, a folio (brochure?) appeared at Rome entitled: *Summarium Super Dubiis an constet de Martyrio et Causa Martyrii*, which must have been very useful to the "Devil's Advocate!" The doubts raised on this subject in the publication referred to, appear to have turned on the incident of the destruction of the pagan pagodas, and other alleged acts of aggression which would seem to have given the fact of the martyrdom really the complexion of an act of war. However, in 1741, Benedict XIV declared the case for martyrdom proved, though it was not until 16th April, 1893, three hundred and ten years after their deaths, that the Martyrs of Cuncolim were declared Blessed (Leo XIII). It is further related that the deaths of the holy band were followed very speedily by the conversion of the entire village, and that a well down which their bodies had been cast, obtained miraculous qualities, which long made it a place of pilgrimage.

JULY 28]

GHEBRA OR GHEBRE, THE BLESSED MICHAEL ABBA  
ABYSSINIAN PRIEST AND MARTYR  
(1788-1855)

EVEN at the present day, Abyssinia is more or less a mystery-land to most people! The well-informed "man in the street" associates it possibly with Dr Johnson's *Rasselas* and probably with Lord Napier of

Magdala's almost bloodless campaign against King Theodore in 1868, and with the more recent and far from bloodless campaign of General Baratieri in 1896, when some nine thousand Italian troops perished in a stand-up fight with the Emperor Menelek's Shoans at Adowa. Ecclesiastically speaking or writing, popular information on the subject of the land of Prester John is even more meagre. Most Church students of their second or third year, senior course, probably know through Alzog's *Church History*, that Abyssinia is one of the strongholds of the Monophysite heresy and that its third-pagan, third-Jewish, third-Christian and totally stagnant Church, acknowledges a kind of primacy of honour in the schismatical Patriarch of Alexandria. Also, that the Portuguese Jesuit Fathers in the seventeenth century made a noble effort to win back the said stagnant Church to Catholicism, actually converting two Neguses or Emperors, and establishing an orthodox Patriarchate of Ethiopia. Then came the reaction and the expulsion of the Sons of St Ignatius (1634), and not until 1840 was any organized attempt made to renew the very formidable task of restoring the land of Queen Candace to its ancient Catholic obedience, which ended it seems in the reign of Justinian. The Emperor of the Code was all for Rome. His Empress, Theodora! a sort of compound of Phryne, Catherine de Medici and Catherine of Russia! was a no less warm partisan of the Monophysites—and the cause of that subtle heresy triumphed!

In 1840 the Lazarist Fathers undertook the work of spreading again the Faith in Abyssinia. The chief of the Missionaries selected for this task was Mgr. de Jacobis, who opened a school at Adowa, which soon attracted many pupils. Mgr. de Jacobis himself made a deep study of the language and literature of the country under Michael Abba Ghebra, the subject of this notice. This remarkable man was born 1788, not far from the town of Mertoulla-Mariam, and after the conclusion of his studies entered a monastery of native monks, about 1813. His contact with Mgr. de Jacobis and the consequent knowledge he acquired of the Catholic Faith, soon convinced this shrewd native savant that the belief in which he had been educated was fundamentally erroneous. He returned to the teaching of the primitive Church of his country, and showed his gratitude for his conversion by drawing up, in conjunction with his instructor, a Catholic Catechism for the use of his countrymen. He also aided in translating into Abyssinian the moral theology of Gury.

In 1845, Michael Ghebra was considered sufficiently advanced in his theological studies to be ordained priest at Alitiena. His first missionary labour after this event was a momentous one, nothing less, in fact, than that of preaching the Faith in the ancient capital, Gondar. The result was a great revival of interest in the subject of Catholicism among the

Emperor's Courtiers, and many persons of distinction were convinced of its truth. Interest of another kind was also manifested by the schismatic clergy and the "Abuna" or Metropolitan, and before very long the Emperor, Theodore II, who seems to have been ever very suspicious of foreign intervention of any kind, ordered the *Missionary Fathers* to be expelled. On the 15th of July, 1854, the fickle population of Gondar, which had at first been inclined to be very favourable to Catholicism, veered completely round, and formally professed its belief in the outstanding heresy of the land that of Eutyches, who taught the only one (divine) nature in Christ—the ancient error condemned at Chalcedon (451). Mgr. de Jacobis was imprisoned for five months, and then deported. Meanwhile Michael Ghebra—with several convert fellow-countrymen, was delivered to the Abuna, cast into a dungeon and subjected to various tortures.

In the early days of January, 1855, the imprisoned priest was brought into the presence of the Emperor, and again on 14th March. On each occasion the accused was most cruelly scourged with a whip made of a giraffe's tail—"with hairs like steel wires!"—in order to make him renounce "the Roman teaching." In vain! "Whatever the Holy Catholic, Apostolic and Roman Church teaches me I believe," was the heroic reply of this valiant old man of sixty-seven. On 31st May, the heroic priest underwent a third examination in the presence of the Court, one of the spectators being the British Consul, Mr Walter Chichele Plowden. He was condemned to death, but respited, no doubt, at the intercession of the Consul. After being dragged about from place to place and subjected to much more ill-usage, the brave Michael Ghebra died on the 28th or 29th of July, 1855. The life-story of the sufferings and fortitude of this truly wonderful priest, who was Beatified on Sunday, 2nd October, 1926, by Pius XI, reads more like a chapter from the history of the Church of the fourth century, than the account of an obscure, though most edifying, episode in a far-off country during the middle of the somewhat prosaic Victorian era!



JULY 30

THE BLESSED THOMAS ABEL OR ABELL, EDWARD  
POWELL, AND RICHARD FETHERSTON, PRIESTS,  
MARTYRS

(1540)

THOMAS ABEL graduated Master of Arts at Oxford in 1516, and later took also the degree of D.D. He acted as one of the Counsel to Queen Catharine of Aragon—whose chaplain he was—at the trial at the Blackfriars, and his zeal in her cause, and still more a book he published defending her marriage, drew down upon him the resentment of Henry VIII. The book, *Invicta Veritas*, challenged the replies of some of the Continental Universities approving of the King's course in seeking a divorce, though it is now well known and was probably more than suspected then, that the favourable judgments in question were obtained by gross intimidation and lavish bribery! Oxford, with an independence truly marvellous in that age of Oriental servility, refused to censure Abel's book, but the author was sent to the Tower and only released on promising not to write or preach for some time. He resumed his chaplain's duties in the Queen's household, but his persistence in acknowledging her as Queen and not as Princess, in spite of the iniquitous divorce, and also, perhaps, his sympathy with the "Nun of Kent" (Elizabeth Barton), whose "prophecies" were the general topic of the day, again brought about his arrest, and he was lodged in the Beauchamp Tower. He has left a memorial there in the shape of a "rebus," consisting of "Thomas A" and the figure of a bell, cut on one of the walls. Abel suffered much during his imprisonment of over two years, owing to want of means. His keepers humanely let him out on bail, for which they were sent to the Marshalsea, and finally, in July, 1540, Abell, Powell, Fetherston and several others were included in the Bill of Attainder—the recent invention of Thomas Cromwell—for having most traitorously "adhered themselves to the Bishop of Rome, being a common enemy unto your Majesty"—and on the 30th of the month the three went to Smithfield, where the usual awful doom of traitors was meted out to them. After the quartering, etc., of the three Catholic Martyrs, three Protestants, Dr Robert Barnes, Thos. Garret and ——— Jerome were burned at the stake for maintaining the tenets of Zwingli.

This double execution caused a great sensation not only throughout England, but also Europe, and De Marillac, the French Ambassador, writing to Francis I, animadverted severely on the reign of terror in this

country, and especially the new method of slaughter without trial brought about by the late Act of Attainder.<sup>1</sup>

EDWARD POWELL. Already in 1495, Powell, a Welshman, was a Fellow of Oriel College, Oxford. In 1501, he became Rector of Bleadon (Somerset) and soon after a Prebend of Salisbury, and Vicar of St Mary, Redcliffe, Bristol, in the muniment room of which already lay, doubtless, that "Canynge's Coffre" from which nearly three centuries later Chatterton was to profess to abstract the alleged Rowley MSS. that were so greatly to puzzle Horace Walpole and the other dilettanti of the day. These and other "pluralities" Powell held in virtue of a licence from Leo X, but he was no mere idle sinecurist. When Luther began to broach his novelties, Powell came forth as a defender of Orthodoxy, and his *Propugnaculum*, in the form of a dialogue between himself and the heresiarch, won for its author the title of "Chief and most brilliant gem" from the University of Oxford. The "Gem" was one of the Counsel of the Queen at the trial, but its abrupt adjournment gave him no opportunity of speaking. Speak he did and with effect, when Mr Latimer "came to Bristol to popularize the King's great cause." Dr Powell's sermons emphasized the unlawfulness of the proposed royal divorce, and also the fact that Kings and princes are subject to the hierarchy in spirituals. The preacher was summoned to London, but it was not until 1534 that he was thrown into Dorchester Jail for contumacy, being shortly afterwards removed to the Tower where he lay for six years when he was included in the Bill of Attainder and martyred at Smithfield, together with the Rev. Thomas Abel and Richard Fetherston, as recorded above.

RICHARD FETHERSTON OF FETHERSTONHAUGH, to give him the fullness of his grand Border name, was a D.D. of Cambridge, and Archdeacon of Brecknock. In 1525, he came to Court as teacher of Latin Grammar to the Princess Mary, afterwards Queen. He voted "for the Queen's cause," *i.e.*, against the divorce, in the Convocation of 1529. Dr Gairdner thinks that Dr Fetherston may have been the confidential agent, who, in 1534, conveyed to Chapuys, the Imperial Ambassador, the message from the Princess Mary that the King, her father, was actually seeking to put her to death! Fetherston's loyalty to Queen Catharine and her daughter soon brought him into the White Tower, where after six years, his rejection of the royal supremacy involved him in the Attainder of 1540, and so joined his name with those of Blessed Thomas Abel, and Edward Powell in martyrdom.

<sup>1</sup> De Marillac may have been the witty Frenchman who was present at Smithfield during these tragic occurrences, and who remarked that they had a strange way of managing things in England, for those who were for the Pope were hanged, and those who were against him, burned! Harwood Hill: *Chronicle of the Christian Ages*, vol. ii.

JULY 31

HANSE, THE BLESSED EVERARD, PRIEST  
MARTYR  
(?–1581)

EVERARD HANSE is described as a "Northamptonshire man," and he must have been at Cambridge either during, or not long after, the episcopate of that puritanical Richard Cocks, Bishop of Ely, who had so much to do with the protestantizing of England after the accession of Elizabeth.<sup>1</sup> If so, Hanse no doubt fell in with the prevailing Zwinglian notions, and by the time he took Orders in the new State Church, was of a mind for many a hot dispute with the papists, including his own brother, a priest of the recently established College of Douay. As in the case of Newman, illness "brought him to his senses," and grace did the rest. He sent for a priest—his own brother one account says—and was reconciled. He left his "fat benefice" (name not recorded), and passed over to Rheims, and after two years of study, being well instructed "in cases of conscience and all duties of priesthood," was made priest on 25th March, 1581, by the Bishop of Chalons. He came to England on 24th April, with Mr Freeman, Mr Fingley and Mr Henry Clinch.

Like several others of our martyrs, Everard Hanse was arrested through visiting the Catholic prisoners in the Marshalsea, and thereby becoming suspected of being a priest. When challenged with the same, he boldly confessed the fact, and was at once heavily ironed and thrust into the common prison among felons and other malefactors. Fortunately perhaps, The Old Bailey Sessions were close at hand, and Mr Hanse, instead of being tortured, as was often the case with priests whose trials were a long time off, was indicted for his priesthood on 28th July, 1581, before three judges and the Recorder, Fleetwood, the latter a great enemy of the Catholics. As was the custom then, a large part of the trial took the form of dialogues between the Bench and the accused, and much of the questioning on this occasion as usual turned on the Pope's supremacy. Mr Hanse gave a very lucid explanation of the Catholic teaching on the subject, carefully distinguishing between the acts of the Pontiff as a private theologian, or as even as Bishop of Rome, and as visible head of the Universal Church. When interrogated further as to the Pope's action

<sup>1</sup> Not long after coming to Ely, Cocks wrote: "We are only constrained, to our great distress of mind, to tolerate in our Churches the image of the Cross and Him who was crucified. The Lord must be entreated that this stumbling-block may at length be removed!" (*Zurich Letters*, 1st Series, No. 28) quoted by Rev. F. G. Lee: *The Church under Queen Elizabeth*, vol. ii., p. 124.

in excommunicating the Queen and deposing her, the prisoner replied that "he hoped his Holiness had done nothing to injure his conscience." Sir Roger de Coverley could scarcely have answered a difficult question more adroitly! In the sequel, the accused was condemned for being ordained in the Church of Rome, and for coming into the country.

All candid persons who were present at the trial, which lasted but one day, must have felt that the priest had given a very good account of himself and the Catholic religion, and that he had behaved with perfect respect and propriety during that very severe ordeal. But to blacken the character of the condemned, and make him odious to the people on the day of his execution at Tyburn, on 31st July, it was given out that the priest had actually maintained that "treason to the Queen was no sin before God!" Mr Hanse therefore told the crowds that what he had said was very different, that it was nothing else than that the confession of the Catholic Faith was no offence to God, but it had been made one in the eyes of the State by the recent statutes on high treason. He was still praying, when the cart moved away, and he was left hanging only to be cut down and butchered in the usual horrible fashion while still alive. As the executioner laid his hand on the Martyr's heart the latter was heard to exclaim: "*O diem felicem*"—Oh happy day! The day before his death he wrote to his brother, a priest of Douay, a letter chiefly on business matters, but concluding with the words: "The day and hour of my birth is at hand, and my Master saith: '*Tolle crucem tuam et sequere me! Vale in Domino.*'—Yours,

EVERARD HANSE.

"*Pridie obitus.*"

Declared Blessed by Leo XIII, 29th December, 1886.

[Challoner: *Memoirs*. Gillow: *Bibliog, Dic.* iii. Rev. F. G. Lee: *The Church under Queen Elizabeth.*]

JULY 31

THOURET, THE BLESSED JOAN ANTIDEA  
(JEANNE ANTIDE)  
(1765-1826)

THE great Revolution in France which, at the time, was proclaimed by so many as the end of Catholicism not only in the land of the eldest daughter of the Church but in Europe itself, was, on the contrary, destined, under God, to be the beginning of a powerful Christian renaissance. Even before the Concordat was signed the revival had begun, and among the pioneers must be reckoned the Foundress, whose story is briefly told as follows.

Jeanne Antide Thouret was born at Sancy in the diocese of Besançon, 27th November, 1765. Her father was a well-to-do tanner, and her mother a pious woman named Jeanne Claude Labbe, after whose death, in 1781, the domestic affairs of the family were managed by Jeanne. Home-life, however, made no appeal to Mdlle Thouret, and as soon as her brothers and sisters began to grow up, she informed her father that her vocation was to the Sisters of Charity. M. Thouret at first refused his approval, but at last consented to her entering the novitiate of the Sisters at Paris, where she was admitted, 1st November, 1787, and clothed with the habit the following October. Then came the Revolution. For some time the Sisters of Charity, owing to the fact of their being regarded as among the "useful communities," were left unmolested, but in 1793 the Terror set in, and with it the dispersion. Sister Thouret had to put off her habit and quit Paris in disguise. Begging her bread on the road, she at length reached her home at Sancy. There, in spite of the turmoil of the time, this brave woman actually opened a school for the benefit of the many poor children whom the sudden and violent enforcement of the "Rights of Man" had rendered not prosperous, but utterly destitute! She remained nobly carrying on this work till things became impossible, when she was compelled to leave the district and make the best of her way to Switzerland. There she met a good French priest, the Abbé Antoine Sylvestre Receveur, also an exile, who asked her to undertake the care of some sick persons. But after a time this good work had also to be abandoned owing to the exigencies of war. Sister Thouret went, and again on foot, to Landeron, in the Canton of Neuchatel, where M. de Chaffoy, Vicar-general of Besançon requested her to open a school and hospital in that town. This came about on 11th April, 1799. A law of the Directory of 1795 had already permitted the exercise of the Catholic religion in France without of course making any attempt to organize it. Sister Thouret had never made her profession as a Sister of Charity, and the pious women who now put themselves under her direction, were styled the Sisters of St Vincent of Paul.

The Rule was drawn up at Dole, and duly approved by Mgr. Le Coz, Archbishop of Besançon. In 1802, the year after the Concordat, the Sisters, who undertook such varied works as nursing, teaching, and the direction of philanthropic institutions, opened several schools in Franche-Comté, Savoy, and Switzerland. They were also about this time given charge of more than 500 prisoners in the female prison at Bellevaux. When the delegates of all the religious Congregations engaged in works of mercy or utility met at Paris, in 1807, in pursuance of an imperial decree, Sister Thouret took part in the deliberations, and explained the exact position of her Institute with regard to the Sisters of Charity which

it so closely resembled. In 1810, at the urgent request of Murat, King of Naples, a band of the "Grey Sisters" went to that city where they were given charge of two hospitals. Mother Thouret, who accompanied the seven Sister-pioneers of the new work, had at first much difficulty to contend with owing to the laws of the Kingdom demanding that the nuns should be under local Superiors and not a Superior-general. Mère Thouret at length won her case, and the convents thus established flourished, which cannot be said of the Kingdom of the ill-fated Joachim Murat!

In 1818, Pius VII approved the Institute of the "Grey Sisters," and confirmed this by a Brief of 14th December the following year. This Brief was in the sequel to be the cause of great difficulties which did much to cloud the closing years of Mère Thouret. For the pontifical document decided that the Congregation should bear the name of the "Congregation of the Daughters of Charity under the protection of St Vincent of Paul," and that, moreover, the Archbishop of Besançon should no longer be the Superior-general, since the work in question was no longer confined to one place, but was now spread over a number of different dioceses. The Brief also modified several details of the primitive rule. Now, Mgr. Cortois de Pressigny, the successor of Mgr. Le Coz at Besançon, refused to accept these changes. His Grace was a prelate somewhat of the old Gallican school, and he argued, fairly enough it seems, that the recent alterations in the Rule ought to have been at least submitted to him as Superior-general. A lengthy and rather acrimonious correspondence on the subject took place between the Archbishop and the Nuncio at Paris, and the matter was still undecided at the time of his Grace's death, 2nd May, 1823. Mother Thouret, who had meantime been forbidden by the aggrieved Archbishop to be received in the houses of her Congregation in the Archdiocese, returned to Naples where she resumed her labours among the poor and infirm. During the stormy days of the Revolution, she had boldly refused to have anything to do with the schismatic clergy of the "Civil Constitution," so ecclesiastical trouble even that of the very modified kind arising out of the Brief of 1819, was not likely to disturb her much!<sup>1</sup> She died piously at Naples, 24th August, 1826, the happy Spiritual Mother of many flourishing houses in various parts of Europe and another glorious witness to the eternal truth that out of evil comes forth good, and that Christ will rule in spite of His enemies! Mère Thouret was Beatified by Pope Pius XI, 23rd May, 1926.

<sup>1</sup> Besançon seems to have been long a focus of Gallican sympathies. Archbishop Le Coz (1802-15), who approved the Rule of the "Grey Sisters," had been a "Constitutional bishop" under the Revolution, and an opponent of the Concordat. His successor, Archbishop Cortois de Pressigny (1815-23) seems to have been Gallican, as a sort of protest against "not being consulted over the matter of the Rule." Cardinal Mathieu (1834-75) was one of the "opposition" at the Vatican Council, 1870.

## AUGUST 1

EYMARD, THE BLESSED PETER JULIAN, FOUNDER OF  
THE SOCIETY OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT  
(1811-1868)

THE growth of devotion to the Blessed Sacrament side by side with the unbelief of modern times, is a phenomenon that both consoles and confirms every Catholic heart. Not only are visits to the Blessed Sacrament now a very common form of private, daily acts of piety, but the magnificent Eucharistic Congresses in almost every nation of the world, are so many demonstrations of faith and reparation to the Majesty of God, so often neglected and even outraged in this sublime mystery of His love. Though all saints, spiritual writers and preachers, generally, have inculcated the necessity of constant union between the soul and its Creator in the Holy Eucharist, it was reserved for the Blessed Peter Julian Eymard to bring that devotion forward prominently as part and parcel of Catholic life. This great servant of God was born at La Mure d'Isere in the Diocese of Grenoble, France, 4th February, 1811.

His mother was known for her great devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, and her son soon manifested a like piety towards the Mystery of Faith. Even during his school days young Eymard paid long and frequent visits to the Blessed Sacrament and began to practise those mortifications which are the sure presage of future sanctity. Peter Julian's father, though likewise very devout, wished his son to follow the family business of cutler, and it was not until the latter had reached the age of eighteen that he could obtain his parents' consent to study for the priesthood.

Meantime, he had not been idle. He had read hard during his leisure moments, and had made some advance in Latin. Some seminary students who used to pass their holidays at La Mure, assisted him in his classical reading, and encouraged the young cutler-apprentice to persevere in the holy vocation he had in view.

As soon as M. Eymard had given his consent, his son applied to the Superior of the Oblates of Mary at Marseilles, and was accepted as a novice. This Congregation had been founded fourteen years before (1815) by the saintly Charles de Mazenod, later Bishop of Marseilles. The object of the Congregation is to sanctify souls by missions, and in this way the future zealator of Souls no doubt considered that a magnificent opportunity would be afforded for the spread of devotion to the Holy Eucharist as a powerful means of undoing much of the irreligion and sheer indifference caused by the upheaval of the Revolution, and the long and bloody campaigns of the Empire. But as in most good works

for God, the Cross came just where one would not expect to find it! Pierre Eymard fell into ill-health, was declared unfit for the strenuous life of the Congregation, and so had to return home. After a period of recuperation, he was so far restored as to be able to resume his studies and this time as a student in the Seminary of Grenoble, which he entered in 1831. Three years later he was ordained priest. After five years of parochial labour marked by great fruit, he obtained leave to return to the Marist Oblates. He began, or rather resumed, his novitiate, but such was his reputation already for holiness and practical ability, that some years later he was appointed first Superior of the College of Belley and then Provincial at Lyons.

In all his sermons and discourses, Père Eymard dwelt on the Holy Eucharist as the great remedy for the spiritual ills of the times, notably as an antidote to that indifferent and cynical spirit which is so largely at the root of the Voltairian atmosphere which has pervaded France ever since the latter part of the eighteenth century. The forties, however, witnessed a great revival of religion in France. The sermons of Lacordaire and Ravignan—the vast output of religious publications by Migne, Didot, Gaume, Caillau, etc.—the pastoral labours of Cardinal Gousset, Archbishop Affre, and Bishop Dupanloup—the political activities of Montalembert, Molé, Pasquier and the Count de Falloux, were all working in the same direction, and combined of course with the zeal of the parochial clergy and religious Orders, notably the Christian Brothers. As a powerful adjunct to these forces, public veneration of the Blessed Sacrament was now to be added. It was on Corpus Christi Sunday, 25th May, while carrying the Blessed Sacrament in procession through the streets of Lyons, that Père Eymard experienced a sudden visitation of grace. “My soul was penetrated with faith and love for Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament,” he wrote afterwards. “Those two hours seemed but an instant to me. I placed at the feet of Our Lord the Church of France, Catholics the world over, society, myself! What sighs! What tears! It was as if my heart were under the winepress! Oh, how I would have liked at that moment to have all hearts within my own, and to be fired with the zeal of St Paul!” But the spoken word, however fervent, is, after all, evanescent, and the zeal of St Paul chiefly lives in his Epistles. So to make the crusade on behalf of the great Mystery of Faith permanently efficacious, Père Eymard founded in Paris, 1st June, 1856, the Society of the Most Blessed Sacrament, the members of which are divided into three classes: (1) The Religious, consecrated to perpetuate adoration; (2) Religious both contemplative and active, engaged in the sacred ministry; (3) a third Order of Priests and laymen who, owing to their special circumstances, only observe a part of the Rule. Pius IX, both in 1856 and 1858, approved



of the new Foundation by Briefs, and in the last-named year blessed the holy Founder in a private audience. On 3rd June, 1863, the Rule was again approved for ten years. In 1895, Leo XIII made the approval perpetual.

The first members of the Society were Père de Cuers and Père Champion. In 1862 a novitiate was formed, and since that time the Society has spread throughout Europe, and to both North and South America. Though the houses in France were closed, 1900, the Perpetual Adoration is still carried on in the Chapel of the Society in Paris by large numbers of devout persons, day and night. Ever since its foundation, the Order of the Blessed Sacrament, as it is popularly called, has paid great attention to the literary side of the apostolate. Books, magazines, and pamphlets in ever-increasing abundance have continued to come forth, all having for object the spread of the knowledge of, and devotion towards, Our Lord's real and substantial Presence in the Blessed Eucharist. Two years after the foundation of the Society of the Blessed Sacrament, Père Eymard, assisted by Mère Margaret of the Blessed Sacrament, and with the approval of the Archbishop of Paris (Cardinal Morlot), founded the "Servants of the Most Blessed Sacrament" for women, canonically erected into a Congregation by Pius IX on 21st July, 1871. The nuns by Rule are bound to make three visits to the Blessed Sacrament daily, and, in addition to other good works, the various Communities throughout the world assist poor churches by presents of vestments. The Mother-house is in Angers, and part of the Rule of the nuns, who are cloistered, is the recitation of the divine office in choir. From the first, Père Eymard was untiring in reminding his spiritual daughters that the Blessed Virgin and the holy women prayed in the Cenacle for the success of the Apostles in their preaching, and that they, the nuns, by their lives of prayer before the Holy Eucharist were extending the work of the Church. On another occasion he said in an address to the same Religious: "You will honour the Blessed Virgin in her Eucharistic life. It is a crown which you will place on her head. Until now, she has been honoured in all the mysteries of her life, but no one has thought of honouring her in the Cenacle. This is because the Eucharistic reign of Our Lord has not yet come. I mean the reign which is gaining strength and spreading, and which is the special grace of our day. It is the Eucharist which should make Our Lord reign over the world, and it is you above all, who should have the spirit of this royal devotion to the Blessed Sacrament."

In addition to the founding of the Congregations already named, Père Eymard also established two other pious works in connection with the same subject. The first of these is the Priests' Eucharistic League, the members of which pledge themselves to spend as far as possible a con-

siderable time (usually about an hour) in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament daily. This Union of the Clergy, apart from its formal object, has done much to foster among priests a spirit of devotion to the great Mystery. The other work is the Arch-confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament, branches of which exist in nearly every parish throughout the world.

Immersed as he was in all these labours, Père Eymard, like St Alphonsus Liguori, still found time for a very considerable literary output with reference to the devotion that filled his heart and soul. Such treatises as *The Real Presence*; *Retreat at the Feet of Jesus in the Holy Eucharist*; *Holy Communion*; and *The Eucharist and Christian Perfection*, have been translated into several languages and are probably the basis of most of the popular devotional manuals on the subject at the present day.

In 1865, Père Eymard, who seems to have had some premonition of his approaching end, went to Rome to make a long retreat. He began at this time to suffer from rheumatic gout, insomnia and other ailments. About 1868 these maladies became worse, and he left Paris on 17th July of that year, for his native place. On the 22nd, he could scarcely finish his Mass, and while being conveyed from Grenoble to La Mure, a cerebral congestion supervened, and on Saturday, the 1st of August, the Apostle of the Blessed Sacrament passed away. His body, after interment at La Mure, now rests in the Corpus Christi Chapel in Paris.

The tributes paid to the memory of the deceased resembled those accorded the holy Curé d'Ars nine years before. Though he did not live to see Eucharistic Congresses established, Père Eymard, in the words of Canon Vaudon, was "among the precursors and protectors of this admirable work." The great, or rather enormous growth of devotion to the central object of worship, made these great Acts of Faith almost inevitable, and on 1st June, 1881, the first Eucharistic Congress opened at Lille under the auspices of Bishop Gaston de Segur. Like most beginnings, it was a small local celebration, but when the fourth Congress met at Freiburg in September, 1885, it was an affair of enormous public import, being attended by Ministers of State, officers of the Army, judges, officials, and thousands of the lesser laity. The nineteenth Congress held in London in September, 1908, was described by the Pope (Pius X) in his letter to the Archbishop of Westminster (Cardinal Bourne) as "the greatest of all," in view of the illustrious personages present at it. These comprised the Cardinals Vanutelli (the papal legate), Gibbons (Baltimore), Mercier (Malines), Ferrari (Milan), Logue (Armagh), Sancha y Hervas (Toledo), Mathieu (France). In addition to the Catholic peers under the Duke of Norfolk, the distinguished laity included the Duke of Orleans and his brother the Comte d'Eu. Pierre Eymard was declared Venerable by Pius X, 12th August, 1908, and Blessed, 12th July, 1925.

AUGUST 2

# LIGUORI, ST ALPHONSUS, FOUNDER OF THE REDEMPTORIST CONGREGATION AND DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

(1696-1787)

Just as it is not easy to think of the law of England without Sir William Blackstone and the many treatises and digests that have since sprung from his *Commentaries*, so it is difficult to consider the moral teaching of the Catholic Church without at once recalling the great Saint and Doctor, Alphonsus Maria Liguori. The eighteenth century, though the age of "dullness and deism" in religion, and of worn-out Cæsarism in politics, did much for jurisprudence and moral philosophy, though the mature fruits of these—chiefly from the seed sown by Beccaria, Bentham and Montesquieu—were not seen till the great age of amelioration that followed the French Revolution.

Alphonsus Maria Anthony John Liguori was born at Naples, 27th September, 1696. His father, Don José de Liguori was a naval officer, and from his mother, a lady of old Spanish descent, the Saint inherited much of that determination which is said to mark the Iberian race. Alphonsus was educated at home, studying hard, but also excelling, like St Francis de Sales before him, in riding and fencing. It was the day of the small sword and the *duello*, and almost every gentleman in Europe was more or less a *maître d'armes*. He also played the harpsichord like a *maestro*, but owing to bad eyesight never became a good shot, for which, no doubt, the partridges and quails which abounded around Naples were duly grateful! At the unusually early age of sixteen he took his doctorate of laws at the University of Naples, and at nineteen was admitted among the Faculty of Advocates, or "called to the Bar" as we should say. He was so diminutive in stature, that his barrister's gown quite enveloped him, but he won case after case for all that, and soon became a noted leader in the Courts. As a boy, Alphonsus was extraordinarily devout, and he had all the saint's horror of sin and every kind of wrong. But at the age of twenty-six, a certain carelessness in his religious duties became noticeable. Nothing worse than that, but the "world," with its banquets, entertainments and flatteries was undoubtedly becoming very attractive to him. From this danger he was delivered by the famous forensic mishap, *i.e.*, the loss of the lawsuit with the Grand Duke of Tuscany involving about £100,000, in which he was engaged as one of the Counsel. The brilliant young barrister had overlooked a document upon which the whole issue turned, and henceforth for him it was a case of "World, I know you now!—Courts, you shall never see me more!"

The forensic trouble was soon to be followed by a family one. Alphonsus, in vehemently desiring to "leave the world," wished to be a priest, to enter the Oratory in fact, and his father as vehemently—almost—wanted him to marry. After a stormy two months, the young barrister wrung a reluctant consent to follow his own bent, and by September, 1725, he had received all the Orders up to that of Subdeacon. On 21st December, 1726, he was ordained priest. The first-fruit of his apostolate was a Society called the "Association of the Chapels," the object of which was to promote the spiritual welfare of the lower orders of Naples, the historical and often very turbulent Lazzaroni, and the Society thus established, still, we believe, exists.

At the Foreign Missionary College, Naples, Alphonsus became acquainted with a Fr. Thomas Falcoia and soon the acquaintance ripened into a very warm friendship. Falcoia had already founded a Congregation of religious women under Rule at Scala, and after he became Bishop of Castellamare (8th October, 1730), he asked the Abbate Liguori to give a retreat to the nuns at the *Conservatorium* as the Convent was called. But Falcoia was also anxious about the state of the peasants in the mountainous parts of his diocese, and he requested Alphonsus to undertake to organize a Society of Missionary Priests for the work. A good deal of opposition met the new project. Propaganda thought the work not necessary, but after a year, the "Congregation of the Most Holy Saviour"—a name to be changed to that of "the Most Holy Redeemer"—came into existence in a small house belonging to the nuns of Scala, 9th November, 1732. It was the birthday of the Redemptorist Congregation! But the pains of the new Foundation did not end with the birth. The Cross which has to seal all good works for God, came in the shape of almost endless dissensions, and by 1st April, 1733—the date is appropriate as showing the wisdom of the Saint and the folly of his opponents—Alphonsus found his institute of missionaries reduced to himself and one lay brother! Even the Bishop of Castellamare was against him, and the Mother Superior of Scala, the cradle of the Redemptorists, had left—or was about to leave—the place to found another convent at Foggia. But like the Roman Senate after Cannæ, the Saint did not despair of the republic of which he was chief, and very soon he had his reward. By 1746, Fathers and novices had so increased that four houses were in existence, and on 25th February, 1749, Benedict XIV approved of the Rule.

From the first, the great object of the Redemptorists has been the salvation of souls, chiefly by missions, retreats and the work of the Confessional, hence such labours as teaching or the direction of seminaries and convents is forbidden by the Rule. At the outset, the missionary

energies of the Congregation were directed to the neglected peasants in remote parts of Italy, and the various countries where houses of the Fathers were set up. But with the growth of towns, the apostolic labours of the missionaries have been equally, or rather more, devoted to evangelizing the great centres of population. In addition to the three usual vows, members of the Congregation take a fourth, that of perseverance, and the vow of poverty includes a refusal of all offices and dignities outside those of the Congregation, unless by express command of the reigning Pontiff, an instance of which occurred to St Alphonsus himself, who, in 1762, was consecrated Bishop of St Agatha of the Goths, a very small diocese between Naples and Capua.

The incessant warfare which marked the life of St Alphonsus was not confined to the wrong-headed among the faithful, actual or nominal. In 1734, when the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies came into being under Charles III, there also commenced that anti-religious policy which, till the time of the Revolution, marked the rule of all the Bourbon Courts. Bernard Marquis Tanucci—the Choiseul or Pombal of Naples—refused State recognition to the Redemptorists, and for years the Congregation lived in half expectation of Government suppression! But the Saint, notwithstanding the “cloud,” worked on as if peace and serenity marked everything! As Bishop of St Agatha, he provided for the better instruction of about 30,000 people, more or less spiritually destitute, took active steps to free the diocese from bad characters and gradually suppressed scandals. Under him the local seminary became the best regulated and instructed in Italy, and the course of Moral Theology, hitherto a mass of very often conflicting principles and opinions, alternating between rigorism and laxity—*tot sententiæ quot homines*—took definite shape and became more precise.

In his ethical system of “Equiprobabilism,” St Alphonsus lays down three principles of conduct which may be said to sum up the whole substance of his teaching on conduct:

(a) In doubt as to the existence of a law, we may follow a less probable opinion for liberty, having left one a little more probable for law.

(b) It is not allowed to follow a less probable opinion for liberty, leaving a more notable one for law.

(c) In doubt as to the cessation of a law or its obligation, we must always follow the law, in other words, fact must be proved not presumed.<sup>1</sup> The Saint as an experienced lawyer, likened the constant strife between law and liberty to a Civil Suit in which the burden of proof rests on the law, though greater probabilities decide the case in its favour. In 1803, the Congregation of Rites declared that the works of the Saint “contained

<sup>1</sup> J. Aertnys: *Theologia Moralis*, vol. i.

nothing worthy of censure," and in 1831, the Sacred Penitentiary decreed that Confessors might safely follow his teaching.

St Alphonsus early vowed to waste *not a minute of time*, and certainly every hour of his long life of nearly ninety-one years was filled up. In addition to his *Moral Theology*, he wrote many minor doctrinal treatises, all designed to instruct the masses and safeguard them from the Voltairian and Jansenistic spirit of the day. His *Glories of Mary*, despite the occasional rhetorical language to be perhaps expected of a Southern writer, is a solid treatise on Marian Theology. He also wrote great numbers of letters, many of them replete with instruction and consolation, and most of these are memorials of permanent value. Two enormous trials were reserved for his last years. In his old age, when worn out and almost blind and deaf, he was induced—in order to obtain State recognition for his Congregation—to sign a "revision" of the Rule, which, owing to far-reaching alterations in the same, practically meant the destruction of the Redemptorists as a body! To prevent this unhappy consequence, Pius VI by decree alone recognised the Redemptorists in the Papal States as belonging to the Congregation, so from this time, 1781, till his death, St Alphonsus was practically cut off from his own Foundation! To this calamity were added dreadful interior conflicts—doubts against the Faith, scruples, temptations of almost endless variety—the last fearful storm that was allowed to buffet that faithful pilot, who had carried the heritage of the Faith safely over so many turbulent waters. The great moral theologian and illustrious Founder passed peacefully from this life to the next, 1st August, 1787, at Nocera de Pagani. He was declared Venerable by Pius VI 4th May, 1796, the year that saw the beatification of St Leonard of Port Maurice. His Canonization by Gregory XVI, on 26th May, 1839, synchronized with that of the great Franciscan Missioner, St John Joseph of the Cross, whose holy counsel and encouragement St Alphonsus had often sought not only as a youth, but also during the first and very troubled years of the Redemptorist Foundation.

Some seven years later (October, 1846), Newman, during the course of his visit to Rome, conversed with a very aged Redemptorist lay brother who had known the holy Founder.<sup>1</sup> The great reputation of St Alphonsus increased rapidly throughout the nineteenth century, and his being declared a Doctor of the Church by Pius IX, in 1871, was a more or less expected crowning honour for one whose sanctity edified, and deep theological and historical learning instructed, all Catholic Christendom.

The appearance of St Alphonsus is familiar to us through the famous portrait representing him in the ordinary day-dress of a bishop, bending in devotion over a crucifix on a table covered with books and writing

<sup>1</sup> W. Ward : *Life of Cardinal Newman*, vol. 1.

materials—a picture as striking in its way as the likeness of Bishop Hay by George Watson, P.S.A., or that of Cardinal Consalvi by Sir Thomas Lawrence. Though regarded as among the first of ascetical writers, St Alphonsus did not favour long meditations or abstract reflections, advising those who sought after perfection to practise the habit of ejaculatory prayer, and the consideration of those vital “points” which strike most people of reflective mind. This faculty of concentrating on principles comes out very strongly in the many small books—the “opuscula,” to give these their usual name—which he wrote for “The People,” and of which so many editions in various translations are still being issued. His great contemporary, Bishop Challoner, whose long life was almost coterminous with that of the illustrious Saint and Doctor, had the same idea as to popular instruction, judging by *The Catholic Christian Instructed*, *Think Well On't*, *The Young Gentleman Instructed*, and other small doctrinal works which did so much to keep the Faith not merely alive but lively during the last dreary decades of the penal times. In conclusion, it may be remarked that the Redemptorists began their Spiritual work in England in 1848, when, on 1st August of that year, the vigil of their great Founder's feast, they took possession of an old mansion at Clapham that had formerly belonged to Lord Teignmouth, and in which members of the once famous “Clapham Sect”—to which Zachary Macaulay, the father of the historian belonged—used to hold their meetings. The third Bishop of the Diocese of Southwark (England), the Rt. Rev. Robert Coffin (1819–1885), was a distinguished missionary of this Redemptorist Foundation, and another and somewhat rare instance of a religious of the Congregation being promoted to the episcopate.

## AUGUST 8

## (1) FELTON, THE BLESSED JOHN, MARTYR

(c.1570)

(2) FELTON, THE BLESSED THOMAS, FRANCISCAN,  
MARTYR

(c.1588). Beatified Dec. 15, 1929.

WHEN Henry VIII, in 1542, granted the Cluniac Abbey, which Aylwin Child, citizen of London, erected at Bermondsey about 1089, to Sir Richard Southwell, the ancient foundation did not take its leave of history. A few years later, the property passed to Sir Thomas Pope, who pulled down the old Priory Church and built Bermondsey House with the materials for his own use—a very general and characteristic form of proceeding of the Reformation period! Bermondsey House appears to have passed to Mr John Felton, a gentleman of ancient Norfolk lineage, who

also owned estates in that county. His wife had been a girl friend of Queen Elizabeth, who allowed the family to have a priest in their house.<sup>1</sup>

All accounts agree in describing Mr John Felton as a man of violent temper and zealous beyond the bounds of prudence where the Catholic Faith was concerned. He took literally the words of the text: *Zelus domus tue comedit me!* The bloody suppression of the Rising of the North, 1569—a rising which Walsingham is said to have secretly fomented to justify the severities of the Queen's Government against the old religion—no doubt inflamed still further the mind of the master of Bermondsey House against the renegade Queen, and made him ready for any desperate enterprise. An opportunity soon presented itself. In 1570, Pius V, unfortunately relying on the ill-informed advice of a handful of embittered English exiles in Rome—and exiles are notoriously the worst of counsellors on these occasions—launched against Elizabeth the famous Bull of Excommunication, *Regnans in Excelsis*, which was destined to recoil with such terrific force not on the object of its anathemas, but the English Catholics themselves! Catholic monarchs, like Philip II and the Emperor Maximilian, were embarrassed and angry at the untoward stroke. Not only were no swords drawn to enforce the Bull—as they should have been according to the mediæval theory of excommunication and deposition—but very soon the tremendous pressure of economic laws rendered the pontifical decree impossible of any enforcement. Even Sixtus V—later the Pope whom Elizabeth is reported to have said she would have liked to have married!—had to think of the rich alum beds of the Papal States which were being worked so profitably under his sway, and was forced to acknowledge that England was the best customer for the same!

Though Catholic historians, generally, have condemned the Bull as a grave and far-reaching political blunder, yet as a pontifical act against an apostate ruler who was grievously oppressing the Faith, its ecclesiastical character has to be considered. From the point of view of tradition and the actual theological teaching of the day, the Pope, as the Spiritual Father of Christendom, had the *right* to denounce his rebellious daughter and declare her unfit to reign. No Catholic sovereign, however much he may have deplored the impolicy of the Bull, doubted the theoretic right of the Pope to do otherwise than he did. So it is not surprising that the fiery John Felton, as soon as the news of the excommunication and deposition of the English "Jezebel" arrived in England, should have hastened to make himself the agent of its canonical publication. Copies of the Bull were procured from the Spanish Ambassador's Chaplain, and

<sup>1</sup> There is much difficulty in identifying the house of the Feltons which is vaguely described as in "Bermondsey Abbey," or "Barmsey" Abbey, as contemporaries called it. The description given in the text, appears to be the most likely one—*Author*.



early in the morning of 15th May, 1570, these were affixed to the gates of the Bishop of London's Palace. Even Napoleon was enraged at the impersonal excommunication of himself by the long-suffering Pius VII, so it is no wonder that the deed of Felton amazed London by its audacity. Suspicion seems to have at once fallen on the Inns of Court where much "popery" was known to exist, and a search was made throughout these hostels of the law with a thoroughness that would have won the admiration of a posse of present day Parisian detectives! At length another copy of the portentous papal edict was found in a set of chambers off Lincoln's Inn, and the luckless possessor confessed under torture that he had got it from Mr Felton.<sup>1</sup> Very soon Bermondsey House was surrounded by the Lord Mayor and his Sheriffs, the Lord Chief-Justice, Sir Robert Catlin, and a battalion of halberdiers. The sequel must have been very disappointing to those who counted on a "scene," for the master of the house quietly gave himself up, and made no mystery about the publication of *Pius Quintus his bull*. "Alone I did it," was his attitude, and like the brave man that he was, he refused to make further disclosures, even under the grim ordeal of the rack. He had in fact none to offer. His bearing at his execution before the episcopal palace, St Paul's Churchyard, on 8th August, 1570, was of a piece with his resolute conduct. He declared that he owed no personal enmity to the Queen, but gloried in his deed, and as a proof of his absence of malice, sent Elizabeth a diamond ring valued at £400. His plate and jewels, estimated at £33,000, were forfeited to the Crown. As John Felton died for canonically "publishing" a sovereign act of the Holy See against a notorious persecutor of the Faith, he has always been regarded as a martyr by Catholics. He was Beatified by Leo XIII, 29th December, 1886.

THOMAS FELTON, Franciscan, Martyr, son of the John Felton just noticed, was, in early youth, page to Lady Lovett. He then went to the English College, Rheims, where in 1583 he received the tonsure from Cardinal de Guise, Archbishop of Rheims. He was admitted to the Friars Minor, but returning to England, was arrested and imprisoned in Bridewell. While there he refused to attend the Protestant services, and so was tied to a chair and carried into the Chapel. In August, 1588, after enduring various tortures in prison, he was brought to trial, apparently at The Old Bailey, where he made a reply to the Court similar to that of Sir Thomas More in 1535, *i.e.*, that he had never read anywhere that God had ordained that a woman should be the head of the Church! He was hanged near Hounslow on 28th August 1588, together with the Venerable James Claxton or Clarkson, a priest of Rheims who had come upon the English Mission in 1582.

<sup>1</sup> Knight's *History of England*, vol. ii., book vi., chap. i.

*N.B.*—The great objection brought against the Bull of Pius V by canonists is that no previous warning had been given the Queen, as had always been the case in previous censures of the kind, and also the usual year's grace of repentance was not afforded. The reference to Elizabeth as "the pretended Queen of England" was also indefensible, as Pius IV, the predecessor of Pius V, had "again and again tried to enter into diplomatic relations with this pretended Queen." His Brief of 1560 gave her the royal title, and all through the years that followed Rome never questioned the Queen's legitimacy.

[A. O. Meyer: *England and the Catholic Church under Queen Elizabeth*, pp. 81, 82.]

AUGUST 9

VIANNEY, ST JOHN BAPTIST, CURÉ D'ARS  
(1786-1859)

AMONG the almost innumerable good works that sprang, phoenix-like, from the apparent ruin of religion in France caused by the great Revolution must be numbered, side by side with the pious Congregations and Institutes, that of the great Saint of the parochial clergy of these later times. For Jean Baptiste Marie Vianney is not only for all time the holy and ever lovable Curé d'Ars, but he is a sort of perpetual institution in himself, animating each succeeding generation of clergy and laity with the example of his heroic sanctity, sound common sense, and touches of humour, these latter very often like the sayings of Sir Thomas More, flashes of holy wisdom disguised as quiet jests. The circumstances of the early years of the great Apostle of parochial life are tolerably well known. His birth at Dardilly, a village near Lyons, his God-fearing, hardworking, peasant parents, Matthieu and Marie Vianney who were kind to the poor and among these on one occasion, St Benedict Joseph Labre, the childish labours of the little John Baptist in the fields; and his wonderful love of God and of holy things—all these incidents worthily introduce to the reader a life that was to be one of the spiritual wonders of the nineteenth century.

John Baptist's earliest recollections were those of the "Terror," when religion was proscribed, the Mass outlawed and the priests hunted as they were in England in the reign of Elizabeth. No doubt in after years the memories of the Great Sacrifice said by stealth in barns, and the instructions of priests by midnight, made the Curé of Ars compare what was a passing phase of trial with that ostracism of religion, which is more or less continuous in the world—an unhappy condition of things which he was to do so much to counteract by his heroic virtues and example.

When John Baptist was twenty years of age, he became a pupil of the Abbé Balley's School for aspirants to the priesthood at Ecully. Already he was a model of holiness, but he seems to have been one of those many students who suffer from a form of neurasthenia which causes sudden and unexpected lapses of memory, and makes the ready display of book-learning a real difficulty. Latin was his chief obstacle, and to obtain help to acquire a sufficient knowledge of the language for his ecclesiastical studies, his pilgrimage to the tomb of St John Francis Regis was undertaken, and the result is said to have been a great improvement of memory which made study henceforth much easier. In fact, for over a year John Baptist was able to act as schoolmaster at Noes when evading the conscription order of Napoleon. The Emperor's despotic rule and his insatiable ambition, which sent scores of thousands of young Frenchmen to death on the battlefield every year, were loathed in most parts of rural France, and in secreting himself at Noes, John Baptist found himself in the midst of a large refugee conscript population presided over by an anti-imperialist mayor. He taught the children of the place for about a year, and with such success that the good people wished him to stay. In 1810, John Baptist gave his brother Francis his portion of the family inheritance (3000 francs), and the latter took his brother's place in the Army, so that the former was able to return to his ecclesiastical studies at Verrières.<sup>1</sup>

In 1813, after further coaching under his friend the Abbé Balley, he entered the Grand Séminaire of St Trenans. His old memory trouble was not over, and there were doubts about ordaining him, but knowing the extraordinary fervour of the apparently unpromising Seminarist, Mgr. Courbon, Vicar-general of Cardinal Fesch, Archbishop of Lyons, resolved to ordain him, and on 13th August, 1815, the Church of France and of the world was enriched by the promotion to the priesthood of John Baptist Vianney. After a curacy of two years under his great friend and patron, the Abbé Balley, the Abbé Vianney was appointed to Ars, as Curé, chiefly, it seems, because the diocesan authorities considered that so dull and unlearned a priest would be more at home among illiterate peasants than in a more fashionable parish! In a comparatively few years, Ars and its pastor were to be household words throughout the Catholic world, with scores of thousands of pilgrims making their way annually to the village for ghostly advice and comfort. The new Curé's first work was to improve the Church of the place. The fabric was redecorated and

<sup>1</sup> When in August, 1855, Napoleon III sent the holy Curé the Cross of the Legion of Honour in recognition of his eminent spiritual services, the recipient said with a smile as he opened the morocco-leather case containing the Order: "I cannot conceive what made the Emperor send me this except for having once been a deserter!" He was made a Canon of the diocese of Belley, but never wore his furred tippet after the ceremony of his installation.

subsequently much enlarged. Frequent Communion and perpetual Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament were instituted, in addition to the Confraternity of the Rosary and other devotions, notably that to St Philomena,<sup>1</sup> "my dear little Saint," as the holy Curé always styled the Maiden-Martyr of Rome.

Greatly distressed by the number of destitute or badly-provided-for girls in the district, the zealous Curé, in 1825, opened the famous Refuge known as "La Providence" under the direction of two pious women, Benoîte Lardet and Catherine Lassagne. The young persons cared for there were given simple but solid instruction in reading, writing, arithmetic, religious knowledge and domestic work. When old enough for service, the girls were placed out in suitable situations, while many found vocations as Sisters in various religious Orders and Congregations. In all these good works, the holy Founder was much assisted by the Vicomte d'Ars and his sister, two members of the old Pre-Revolution aristocracy of France whose memories are still held in benediction.

In the midst of these labours the Curé was leading a life of extraordinary mortification. He literally gave away nearly everything he possessed, slept very little, and then on a hard bed or even on the floor, and fasted so rigorously that a few cold boiled potatoes sufficed him for a week! In addition to these self-inflicted trials God allowed others of a peculiarly distressing kind to afflict His servant. He was calumniated even by some of his brother priests! who dared to ascribe his zeal and obvious sanctity to "ambition and hypocrisy!" and who even went so far as to denounce to the Bishop the "misguided zeal of this ignorant and foolish Curé!" "Gentlemen," replied his Lordship, "I wish you a little of that folly about which you complain! It would do no harm to your understanding!" To this period of suffering also belongs the alleged diabolical manifestations—the unearthly noises at night, the violent shaking of the house, and even the burning of his furniture which accompanied them.

Despite all these internal and external persecutions, the Curé worked on, and very soon the fruit appeared. Ars had long been a model parish. The people fervent and scandals removed. From about 1835, streams of pilgrims began to come to the place to make their confessions to the saintly Curé, hear his wonderful discourses—simple yet penetrating—and obtain from him those words of spiritual advice which were hung upon as oracles from Heaven! From 1835, a service of public conveyances had to be organized between Lyons and Ars to convey to and fro these

<sup>1</sup> St Philomena or Filumena, "the Maiden Martyr of Rome," but of uncertain date. Some relics, believed to have been hers, were discovered in the Cemetery of S. Priscilla, May, 1802. Great devotion to the "Maiden Martyr" grew up, especially in France and Italy, and Pope Gregory XVI appointed 9th September as her feast.

crowds which were latterly estimated at over twenty thousand a year. These pilgrims comprised persons of every class, priests and religious, ministers of state, members of the nobility, officers in the Army and Navy, professional and business people. The greater part of the day and night was spent by the Curé in the Confessional, and it became a common practice for those who sought his ministration to wait their turn for ten, fifteen or even twenty hours in the Church! He gave advice to great prelates like Mgr. Dupanloup, Bishop of Orleans, and Dr Ullathorne, Bishop of Birmingham. To the latter he said: "I believe, and I am sure, that the Church in England will return again to its ancient splendour!"<sup>1</sup>

The sermons and discourses of the holy Curé, which have been preserved in such works as *The Spirit of the Curé d'Ars*, etc., are full of those fervent appeals, forcible lessons and homely illustrations, which, joined to the living example of the preacher, never failed to make a profound impression. Though not learned or brilliant, the Saint was full of useful pastoral information and strong common sense which he conveyed chiefly by means of apt similitudes drawn from everyday life and experience. He abhorred singularity in devotion and deportment, and never encouraged forms of piety or mortification that might in any way be unsuitable, or give rise to comment. The attempts which he made on more than one occasion to leave his parish were dictated by a saintly conviction of his own unfitness for parochial work; but in each case he returned to his sorrowing parishioners, convinced, as he was in the last instance, that God wished him not to go to La Trappe and there weep over his "poor sins!" but to continue labouring for souls as the Curé of Ars.

In personal appearance, the St Curé d'Ars was short, with an inclined head and a mass of thick, white hair, which flowed down on either side. His eyes were bright, and he bore, generally, as striking an external resemblance to Voltaire, as his great contemporary, the artist, Paul Delaroche, did to Napoleon.

In the May of 1843, the Curé was taken seriously ill, and it was believed that the end was at hand. He recovered—cured as he said, by St Philomena—and notwithstanding his mortified life, and immense labours, he appears to have enjoyed during life, generally, pretty good health. About the middle of July, 1859, he began to fail, and on the 29th, after catechizing and hearing confessions as usual, had to take to his bed. "I think it is my poor end," he said, and so it proved, for after a short illness of less than a week he expired on 4th August, just as his friend and

<sup>1</sup> His reply to the illustrious Bishop of Orleans, who had expressed the fears he felt at accepting the burden of the episcopate, was very characteristic: "Monseigneur, there are many Bishops in the Calendar of Saints, but very few Curés! Judge, Monseigneur, whether you have as much cause to tremble as I!"

fellow-labourer, the Abbé Toccanier, was reciting the words: "Let the holy Angels of God come forth to meet him, and conduct him to the City of the heavenly Jerusalem." His obsequies in the Church of Ars, two days later, were a public demonstration of affection, veneration and sorrow, in which thousands joined. Declared Venerable by Pius IX on 3rd October, 1874, the Curé d'Ars was Beatified by Pius X, 8th January 1905, and Canonized by Pius XI, 31st May, twenty years later. St John Baptist Vianney is one of the great spiritual phenomena of the Church. Without the natural gifts which are usually expected in those who influence others, he drew not only vast numbers of persons to himself by his magnetic holiness, but the good he effected has continued to grow and increase since his death. The wonderful story of his life and labours is eagerly read by clergy and laity everywhere, and though dead, he yet speaks to millions by the ever-living force of example. That example, indeed, appears to be as potent now as it was in his own time, and no doubt it will continue to perpetuate, as it werè, his glorious apostolate throughout long years and to the remotest posterity.

[The Standard *Life* of the St Curé d'Ars is that by the Abbé Alfred Monnin, in two volumes (Paris 1861). It has been translated into English and most European languages. *The Blessed John Vianney, Curé d'Ars, Patron of Parish Priests*, by Joseph Vianney, *The Saints Series*. (Burns, Oates & Washbourne.) See also *Life* by Trochu.]

## AUGUST 12

PERCY, THE BLESSED THOMAS, SEVENTH EARL OF  
NORTHUMBERLAND, MARTYR

(1528-1572)

THOUGH an insurgent by descent, for his father, Sir Thomas, brother of the Sixth Earl, had been "out" in the Pilgrimage of Grace, and had, in consequence, died beneath Tyburn Tree—the nominal head-centre of the Northern Rising, so celebrated by Wordsworth,<sup>1</sup> seems to have lacked much that was requisite for a leader of so difficult an enterprise. In fact, he was to his unfortunate followers what the Earl of Mar, "Bobbing John" was to be to the fiercely indignant and critical clans of 1715, a mere poor led captain that made them sigh for "one hour of Dundee!" Thomas Percy after the tragic death of his father was, with his brother Henry, kindly cared for by Sir Thomas Tempest of Tong Hall, and as everything seemed to come to those who could wait during the Tudor

<sup>1</sup> In his poem, "The White Doe of Rylstone."

era, he had the satisfaction of seeing his family "restored in blood" in 1549, and then three years later followed more good fortune. The insufferably priggish boy King, Edward VI, died, and the self-seeking gang of adventurers that had loaded themselves with "riches, rank and retinue" under the cloak of the most odious cant and hypocrisy which flourished like a luxurious weed during this nauseous period of sanctimonious greed, found their day of reckoning at last! Queen Mary, who had herself suffered terribly from the "evangelizers!" repaired as far as she could, the awful havoc done in the past twenty years, and among those who came into their own again was Thomas Percy, presently made Governor of Prudhoe Castle, and a little later promoted to be Earl of Northumberland in consideration of "his noble descent, constancy, virtue, valour in arms and other strong qualifications." So ran the regal wording of the grant, though the "strong qualifications" apart from valour, do not seem to have been much in evidence some twelve years later! Though made a Knight of the Garter by Elizabeth (1563), he was already suspected, being denounced by Burleigh's spies as "dangerously obstinate in religion!" Like nearly all the northern nobility and gentry, and indeed all with the smallest grain of logic, he could not see how an Act of Parliament could make a Church, or that a woman or any other lay person could be the head thereof! The Church and its visible government are either established by Christ or they do not exist at all!

For the rest, Northumberland showed that he was a man of considerable public spirit—up to a point. Under Mary he had displayed much courage when the French, acting in collusion with Sir Thomas Stafford, had attacked Scarborough. As Lord Warden he did much to check the inroads of the Scottish Borderers. But for the slow suppression of Catholicism, and later the imprisonment of the Queen of Scots, he would have probably lived and died a great local nobleman, with a reputation in the hunting-field, and as an efficient keeper of the Queen's peace in the wild turbulent country between Berwick and the Solway Firth. When Queen Mary arrived at Carlisle in May, 1568, Northumberland had an interview with the royal fugitive. Mary Stuart, like her descendant, the hero of the '45, had the subtle gift of fascination, and the Earl's belief in the justice of her cause now rose to enthusiasm. His chivalrous attentions to the unhappy Queen were bitterly resented of course by her foes, and he received peremptory orders to leave Carlisle at once. He did so, but the insult rankled and was ere long to lead to great results.

Ever since the accession of Elizabeth there had been deep and widespread discontent in the North of England, owing to the religious policy or persecution rather, of the Crown. As Sir Ralph Sadler expressed the

feeling on the subject: "There were scarcely ten gentlemen of note that approved of Her Majesty's proceedings in matters of religion."<sup>1</sup> The simmering resentment was encouraged by emissaries from Spain, and military aid from the Duke of Alva was promised. A scheme was formed between the Earl of Northumberland—smarting under the "gross disrespect" of the Carlisle incident—and the Earl of Westmorland (Charles Neville) to head a rising to restore the Catholic Faith to the country and the Queen of Scots, the rightful heir, to the Throne.

Information as to this formidable conspiracy got abroad, and the attempted arrest of Northumberland at Topcliffe brought the leaders and their followers into the field before "the day," and therefore but badly prepared. Though the infantry was an ardent but ill-disciplined body of 4000, the horse, about 1700, were excellent, and vigorous action might have done much. Many successful risings have begun under far less promising auspices, and considering Northumberland's known courage and administrative ability, it is really astonishing that so poor a fight was put up under his command! A desultory siege of Barnard Castle did lead to the surrender of Sir George Bowes, and there was a march on Durham where the Mass was restored for a day or two and the heretical service-books torn up. There were marches here and there to Richmond, Northallerton and Boroughbridge, to beat up for recruits. The Earl of Sussex and the Earl's own brother, Henry Percy, were in the field with the royal troops, and the continuous retreat of the Earls to the Border before that force, may have been with some idea of being joined by the Border Clans. But retreat is always very dispiriting, and at Clifford Moor, near Weatherby, the break-up took place. The insurgents are said to have been short of supplies, and their counsels divided, but even so, every effort should have been made to strike a blow. The Highland Army on the eve of Culloden (April 16th, 1746), was in even a worse plight, yet fight it did, heroically, and the weary, outnumbered clans, with storm, smoke and fire against them, nearly swept away Cumberland's left, and died like the Spartans at Thermopylæ. The army of the Northern Rising had knights and their tenants, labourers and peasants, all armed and stout of heart, and it is at least probable that a battle would have given them the victory. It is said that Northumberland wished to avoid a useless effusion of blood, but he must have known—in fact no one knew better—that Elizabeth like all her family was merciless, and that even a bloodless surrender would not gain grace. We think of that gallant array with the banner of the Five Wounds borne by the Venerable Richard Norton, sometime High-Sheriff of Yorkshire, and even at this distance of time feel indignant at the pusillanimous counsel to disperse! *Sauve qui peut*

<sup>1</sup> Sadler's "State Papers," cited in Knight's *History of England*, vol. ii., book vi., chap. i.



is well enough when all is really lost, and in fact the historic phrase was not uttered in the first instance, until the Old Guard had been rolled back in hopeless rout down the slopes of Waterloo, and even then the remnant of that consummate soldiery died but did not surrender!—if we may believe the traditional French account.

The sequel of the ignominious collapse is ghastly enough. Westmorland succeeded in getting away to Flanders, but meantime vengeance in the worst style of Tudor savagery fell on the luckless rank and file, and every town, nay every village between the Wear and the Tyne had its hideous show of gibbets and impaled heads! Northumberland and his gallant Countess—Napoleon would have certainly called her “the only man of her family!” as he did the Duchess of Angoulême—got safely to the Border, and for a time abided with Graham of Harlaw and his outlaw bands, till Moray, the Regent, for gold had him sent to Edinburgh, though it was another Regent, the Earl of Mar, who for £2000 handed the fugitive Earl over to the tender mercies of Her Grace of England.

On 22nd August, the Earl mounted the scaffold on “The Pavement” at York. He was offered his life if he would conform, but nobly disdained the ignominious price, declaring his fidelity to the Catholic Faith—as became “a Percy in life and death.” Nothing so much in life became him as the leaving of it! A relic of the Crown of Thorns set in a gold cross, which he wore at his martyrdom, is now among the historic treasures of Stonyhurst College.

[C. Knight's *History of England*, vol. ii, Book vi. Surtees: *History of Durham*.]

AUGUST 13

BERCHMANS, S.J., ST JOHN, CONFESSOR

(1599–1621)

A WORTHY Canon—we believe that is the right way to write and speak of individual members of any Chapter—once expressed the opinion in the presence of the writer that many of the Saints must have been very tiresome! Large numbers of even the devout, will no doubt, thoroughly agree with this view, but we are certain that however “difficult” many of the elect may have been, this characteristic does not extend to the Saint whose short life forms the subject of these remarks. John Berchmans, the patron of youth and especially of those under vows, was born at Diest, a small town near Louvain, 13th March, 1599. His father, John Charles Berchmans, though described as a shoemaker, was apparently a master

shoemaker in a good way of business, and already well on in the social scale, being Chairman of the Town Council and an ex-churchwarden. It was indeed the age of the social ascent of the middle class, both in England and on the Continent, and the same tendencies to betterment of position mark the history of either sphere. Elizabeth Vanden Hove, the mother of the future Saint, had relatives which included a cardinal and military officers of rank among their number. Of the five children of the Berchmans family, three entered the religious state, John and Charles in the Society of Jesus, and Adrian as an Augustinian. The fourth son, Bartholomew, became a soldier. John, who was of a very happy disposition, received the first part of his education at the elementary school of his native town. Although quite free from affectation and any precocious signs of "piety," he was already, even at this early age, remarkable for his devotion to the Holy Mass and the rosary.

The long illness of his mother, which began about this time, also gave him a wide field for the exercise of patience and charity, and as many hours of each day as could be spared from school attendance and other duties, were devoted to soothing the sufferings of the bed-ridden invalid. The period from about October, 1609, to August, 1612, was spent by young Berchmans at Tongerlo, as pupil of a Canon Emmerick who prepared boys for the priesthood. Though John has been described by pessimistic biographers as not clever, he was brilliant enough even at this time to write Latin verses which many an older and riper scholar might envy! He also manifested considerable histrionic ability, and in the more or less "mystery plays" which the boys at Canon Emmerick's "Academy" acted at Shrovetide, Christmas and other festivals, young Berchmans distinguished himself in such leading parts as that of "Daniel" to the "Susanna" of a fellow-pupil.

It was in or about 1612 that the great crisis in John Berchmans' life occurred. For some time past his father's trade had been declining, while the mother's long illness had been a serious drain on the family purse. It seemed necessary therefore that the eldest son should follow some trade! But the son and heir in this case was a student, and destined to remain one, and we know that such people may try their hands at fifty trades or professions and make nothing of any of them! Samuel Taylor Coleridge, though he wrote marvellous Greek verses at Cambridge, utterly failed as "Silas Tomkyn Comberbach" to grasp even the elementary drill of the awkward squad of the 15th Light Dragoons at the Reading barracks, and King George III had soon to be relieved of his bad bargain! Eventually the bookish John was allowed, and wisely so, to continue his studies, first under a priest named Timmerman, and then with a Canon Froymont at Mechlin. While with the Canon, who seems

to have been of the "sporting cleric" type, young Berchmans acted as a serving lad in the house, and during school hours attended the classes of a neighbouring College. Like the youthful Thomas More in the household of Cardinal Morton, Archbishop of Canterbury, he attracted attention, but not as in the case of the wit and chancellor by any commanding abilities, but by the graceful way he waited upon the Canons when they dined at his patron's table, and also by his habitually cheerful manner. Canon Froymont, as we said, was sporting in his tastes, and often went forth, wheel-lock fowling-piece in hand, to shoot the wild duck and mallards that abounded on the neighbouring marshes and by the long canals. It is recorded that his faithful servitor—our Saint—who accompanied him on these expeditions, trained the Canon's dog to retrieve the fallen feathered quarry—an art difficult enough to have been specially mentioned by Sir Roger de Coverley as one of the many countryside accomplishments of Mr Will Wimble!

When the Jesuits opened their College at Mechlin, in 1615, young Berchmans became one of their first pupils, and was at once put into the highest class. It was at this time that he began to experience a vocation to the Society—a vocation which was not to be followed up without a great deal of opposition. His father was quite against his son going into an Order. He would not, it seems, have minded John becoming a secular priest. Representations were made here and there, and Fr. de Greef, young Berchmans' confessor was appealed to. The good Father could only remind the objecting relatives and others, that vocation often takes strange turns, and makes no account of the "fit and proper"—as the world interprets that eminently respectable phase—but that on the contrary the Spirit breatheth where it listeth! Finally, the arguments against the step in question were silenced, and on 24th September, 1616, John Berchmans entered the Jesuit novitiate at Mechlin.

As a student at Canon Emmerick's and Canon Froymont's, young Berchmans had been remarkable for his religious fervour, getting up early in the morning, serving two and sometimes three Masses and making occasional pilgrimages to local shrines. It is not surprising, therefore, that he became an admirable novice, accommodating himself always to the, often exacting, conditions of community life, and anticipating, as it were, the wishes of his Superiors. He also gave Catechism lessons to the children of the district, and his young pupils looked forward to his instructions. After two years at Mechlin, he went to Antwerp to commence his philosophy. Meanwhile his mother had died (1st December, 1616), and on 1st April, 1618, his father was ordained priest. Monsieur Berchmans only lived about seven months after his ordination, dying on 24th September following, a few days before his son, the Jesuit novice,

set out to say good-bye to him prior to going to Rome. Almost a month to the day, after his loss (24th October), John Berchmans left for the Eternal City. He made the whole journey, it seems, on foot—a distance of about three hundred leagues! Such a feat these days would afford more than a passing comment in the newspapers, but in those times it was apparently nothing out of the ordinary. Doubtless the young novice and his companions on the road put up for the night at various religious houses on the way. Arrived at last in Rome, John Berchmans plunged almost at once into the mysteries of philosophy, mathematics, and Greek. Fr. Martindale in his very interesting *Memoir* of the Saint, informs us that the latter's Greek Grammar is preserved at Stonyhurst. No doubt the very sight of its closely printed pages, involved rules and crabbed Greek characters—bad characters mainly!—would make even an ardent Hellenist glad that he was born after the days of Dr William Smith and Thomas Kerchever Arnold! As usual, the young Flemish novice soon became very popular owing to the happy disposition which smiled at trouble and rejoiced in the irksome, such as showing more or less distinguished but no doubt boring, visitors around Rome and serving late Masses, thereby imperilling the punctual attendance of the obliging acolyte at the Roman College. Like that good Passionist Father who as a student had urged himself to read hard by thinking from time to time of the souls which were longing for and in want of his ministry, so John Berchmans ground away at his philosophy course by reflecting how strenuously able-minded heretics were preparing themselves on the other side! In May 1621, our scholastic had passed his examination, and was bid prepare for the great ordeal of defending "Universal Philosophy" against all comers! Such a defence seems a very large demand to make from anyone, and it is probable that the exertions required for this formidable "Act," joined to the exceedingly trying conditions of the Roman climate—not to mention the periodic malaria from the large tracts of then undrained marsh-land outside the city—proved too much for a constitution that had never been in any sense robust. In July of this year (1621), John Berchmans began to fail, and expressed his belief that the end was not far off. In August, he told the Superior and also several of his friends that God was calling him. On the 5th of the same month he took part in a philosophical disputation the result of which was—to him—a temperature! On the 7th, he was ill in bed with fever, had restless nights and grew weaker visibly. Humorous to the end, he told the Rector that he feared that his death would cause relations between Rome and Belgium to become strained, since another Belgian Jesuit had already died since coming to Rome! On the 10th, he received Holy Viaticum, and supported by two assistants, the dying Saint made a profession of his wish "to live and die

a true child of my Holy Mother the Catholic, Apostolic Roman Church," and "a true son of the Society." Among those who assisted at this noteworthy death, was Fr. Cornelius à Lapide, the famous commentator on the Holy Scriptures. During the evening of the 12th, the *Life of St Aloysius* was read, and John Berchmans after the manner of that holy youth, clasped his rosary, his crucifix and the book of rules saying, "These are my three treasures and with these I shall gladly die." He had his wish. About eight o'clock on Friday morning, 13th August, 1621, the youthful glory of the Society passed away, his eyes still fixed upon his "treasures," and just after bowing his head at the words of *Sancta Virgo Virginum* and *Mater Castissima* of the Litany then being recited. His wonderful cheerfulness, obedience to rule and a devotion that turned every opportunity of serving God and his neighbour to account, had made John Berchmans what he was, and for days after his decease, large crowds came to venerate the remains of him who was already regarded by many as a Saint. Though that very year, Philip, Duke of Aerschot presented a petition to Pope Gregory XV praying that the cause of the deceased might be introduced, it was not until 1865, that John Berchmans was Beatified (Pius IX). Twenty-three years later (1888), Leo XIII inscribed on the list of the Saints the name of this holy and lovable youth whose title to heroic sanctity had been chiefly won by his triple devotion to his crucifix, his rosary and his book of rules.

[Life in Italian by Fr. Cepari: *Vita di Giovanni Berchmans, Fiammingo religioso della Compagnia di Gesù*. (Rome 1627.)  
Fr. Goldie, S.J.: *Life of John Berchmans*. (London 1873.)  
Fr. C. Martindale, S.J.: *St John Berchmans*. (C.T.S.).]

## AUGUST 18

ST CLARE OF MONTEFALCO, VIRGIN  
(1268?–1308)

THE contention of the seven ancient cities for the honour of Homer's birthplace, finds a sort of counterpart in the holy rivalry of the Augustinian and Franciscan Orders for the membership of St Clare of Montefalco. The Saint, who belongs to that class of very mortified persons dear to the imagination and devotion of the Irish and Latin peoples, was born of respectable parents—if the phrase "*honesto genere nata*" of the *Breviary* implies that description—in 1268. The austerities which give such a note of awe to her life, seem to have begun with her early childhood, for

even when quite young, she seldom slept in bed, but on the ground, and then only when very tired! But these and other rigorous practices did not satisfy her love of the Cross in actual life. Her sister, who was a woman of like mould, had recently founded a community of young girls, and into this Society Clare now sought to be admitted. Her request was granted but only after some rather lengthy delay, it would seem, for in her gratitude to God at being accepted, the ardent young postulant imposed on herself a severe fast of seven days. In fact, it is said that during that time her whole diet consisted of merely a morsel of bread and half an apple! Such penances and self-denials appal us, and we are inclined to apply the adjective excessive to such practices, yet about the time that Sister Clare was enduring these fasts for the love of God and the conversion of sinners, the Border Scots under Sir William Wallace were doing much the same kind of exercise while raiding the northern counties, plundering, burning and driving off the Northumberland and Cumberland cattle, for we learn that all these red rovers individually subsisted on daily was a few handfuls of oatmeal baked on a round iron plate!

It is in connection with this community that all the dispute about the Saint already referred to has arisen. The Rule of the Sisters was that of the Third Order of St Francis, the "lay" not the "regular" one. But as the community desired a stricter rule of life, the Bishop of Spoleto gave the members the Rule of the Third Order (regular) of St Augustine. Fr. Luke Wadding—the learned Irish Franciscan (1588–1657)—breaks a literary lance for his own Order in the matter, the Bollandists do the same for the Augustinian contention, but the above solution, which is that now generally adopted, appears to be the correct one.

After the death of her Sister, Clare, much against her will, found herself forced to undertake the direction of the Community. She increased her great austerities, fasted daily on bread and water, and wore the hair-shirt. It may have been about this time that she inflicted a terrible penance on herself for breaking the Rule of Silence to speak to her mother! The said penance consisted in standing barefoot in the snow while she recited the Our Father a hundred times! Truly, as Alban Butler says in his notice of St Alexis, there are many things in the lives of the Saints to be admired but not imitated!

If she was thus merciless to herself, Clare had nothing but kindness for others. She literally extended her hand daily to the poor (*Prov.* xxxi. 20), and made it a rule of the house never to turn any beggar away without some relief. She seems to have been among the number of those Saints who, in return for their heroic conquest of self, have received the gift of theological and general intuition. She more than once confounded the false teaching of such contemporary heresies as the "Apostolic Brethren" of Gerard

Segarelli, discerned the secret thoughts of others, and even solved abstract questions in philosophy. What was perhaps still more important, her strong judgment and "sweet reasonableness" were the means of healing not only family discords, but even public enmities of the kind which, in the Italy of the Republics, generally ended in the war of town against town.

Like all the Saints, Clare of Montefalco had an ever-increasing devotion to the Passion. Indeed, her whole life with its fastings, vigils and macerations, was a living representation of the famous words of St Paul: "With Christ I am nailed to the Cross!" (*Gal. ii. 20*). It is piously believed, and the matter was among those historically proved at the time of the process of her Canonization, that Our Saviour, under the guise of a pilgrim and bearing the Cross, once appeared to her and impressed upon her heart the sacred figure of the crucifix. Not only had the Saint the gift of reading hearts, but she also possessed the power of effectually aiding persons troubled by evil spirits. She died sweetly in the Lord on 18th August, 1308, and some time before her death she said to a Sister, who marvelled at the wonderful patience the Superior always showed, no matter how painful or disappointing the occurrence might be: "If thou seekest the Cross of Christ, take my heart, in it thou wilt find my suffering Lord." These words were remembered, and after death her body was opened when the sign of the Cross was discovered impressed upon the heart of the deceased. Though steps were taken almost immediately after her death to have her cause introduced at Rome, it was not until the reign of Pope Clement XII (1730-40), that the name of Clare of Montefalco was enrolled in the Roman Martyrology. She was Canonized by Leo XIII on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, 8th December, 1881—a very long time indeed after her death, but not so long as the case of St Bernard of Menthon, the "Apostle of the Alps," who died 1008, but was not numbered by the Church among the Saints, till 1681 (Innocent XI).

AUGUST 19

EUDES, ST JOHN, CONFESSOR  
(1601-1680)

THERE appears to be a tendency nowadays among persons who venture to treat of historical matters, to regard the "horrors of war" as a very exaggerated subject. Even the Civil Wars of France in the sixteenth century, though embittered by religious animosity and almost numberless acts of perfidy and cruelty, only affected, after all, the actual localities of the battles and sieges, while elsewhere the daily life of the people went on

more or less undisturbed. Even during the recent world-war, fairly normal conditions were maintained outside the battle zones and devastated areas, so much so, indeed, that the question: "are we at war?" was frequently put usually in a very surprised tone to remind the thoughtless that belligerent conditions were actually in being. We begin our notice of St John Eudes with these remarks, because he has often been cited as an example of one of the many holy and strenuous reformers who were raised up to restore the Church in France to something like her ancient splendour, both religious and material, after the long devastation of the Civil Wars. Though the country was generally in a somewhat sad condition at the beginning of the age that witnessed the heroic labours of our Saint, the state of things seems to have been better than many writers have described them, and the fact that such a whole-hearted response was made to the efforts of such men as St Vincent of Paul, Cardinal de Bérulle, Père Condren, M. Olier and the subject of these remarks, to mention but a few of the best-known names, is perhaps a satisfactory proof that religion in France at this time was not dead but only in a state of lethargy.

John Eudes was born at Ri, Normandy, 14th November, 1601. His father, Isaac Eudes, was a small farmer whose knowledge of herbs and simples made him invaluable as a local "doctor," in a district where members of the regular faculty were certainly not abundant. The Saint's mother was Martha Corbin, and of the six children born of the union two rose to distinction, the subject of this biography, and François, afterwards known as an historian.

The great marks of John's character as a child were his charity and patience, joined to a tender devotion to the Holy Mother of God. At the age of fourteen, he entered the Jesuit College at Caen. His philosophical studies ended in 1621, and the same year (September) he received the tonsure and minor orders as an earnest of his vocation to the priesthood. His parents had arranged an "advantageous marriage" for their son, but he convinced them that his future lay with the altar and not the hearth. His next great step was to seek admission into the Congregation of the Oratory which had been founded by de Bérulle, in 1611, on the model of that of St Philip Neri. The idea of the Congregation was the sanctification of the clergy by the practice of those ecclesiastical ideals—fervent prayer, study, becoming conduct of life, and zeal for souls, which were much wanted at that time to exorcise the apathetic attitude and even positive worldliness, which were among the worst fruits of the considerable demoralization among ecclesiastics caused by the widespread civil strife of the preceding century. The Abbé Eudes entered the Oratory at Paris on 25th March, 1623, and he was ordained on 20th December, 1625. "Never had a novice been seen in this house who was so fervent," wrote



one of his biographers afterwards. So perfect a model was ordered to preach even though only in minor orders. For about two years before he was raised to the priesthood, he "sat at the feet" of Père Condren, the wonderful ascetical writer and preacher, of whom it was said by St Jane de Chantal that he was "capable of instructing the angels!" Père Eudes said his first Holy Mass on Christmas day, 1625, and then after a further year of study, prayer and mortification at Aubervilliers, began the active life that was to produce so much fruit.

During the course of the years 1627-31, the plague made periodic ravages in Normandy, as it did in England, Germany and over most of the Continent at that time. Such devastations were regarded as visitations of God, as doubtless they are in many cases, but even if one be inclined to ascribe these calamities in question to the almost total absence of sanitary conditions, as these are at present understood, it is the circumstances attending their occurrence and not the cause that must occupy our attention. With the permission of his Superior, de Bérulle, Père Eudes hastened to the stricken areas, and in conjunction with another devoted priest, the Abbé Lament, ministered to the increasing numbers of the sick and dying, giving Holy Viaticum and Extreme Unction not only nearly all day, but very often during a greater part of the night! During one of these heroic administrations, that of 1631, Père Eudes, like Diogenes, actually made his abode in a large barrel in a field, so as to avoid the risk of carrying back the infection to the inmates, which would have been the case had he lived in a house.

The cessation of the plague left Père Eudes free for another great work associated with his life—that of giving missions. The decade 1630-40 may be said to have been the natal era of missions in France. St Vincent of Paul's "Priests of the Missions" were established 1632. Two years later, M. Olier preached courses with great success in Auvergne. Though the idea was not new, the methods employed were, *i.e.*, regular series of carefully prepared discourses usually on the "eternal truths," followed by confession, and very soon a wonderful change for the better came over parochial life in France. The parish clergy themselves followed the example thus given, preaching became very general, sermons improved both in matter and delivery, and catechetical instruction followed suit, with the result that a religious revival arose over France which unlike most revivals has had permanent results to this day. Père Eudes had the great gift of holding his hearers and arousing their interests—and fears. Like all really successful preachers—successful in the spiritual sense—he sanctified his addresses by prayer and mortification, in addition to a material preparation of the most painstaking kind.

The pulpit addresses of Père Eudes often stirred his congregations

to the depths, and among the conversions effected as the result were those of many of the frail sisterhood, that class, which, very often more sinned against than sinning, has ever been a problem wherever the conditions of "civilized" life obtain. About 1636, Père Eudes opened a refuge at Caen for women of this description, and placed it under the care of Madame Madeleine Lamy, whose charity, prudence and piety were well known. In 1641, this humble beginning became the "Community of Our Lady of Refuge," under the direction of Margaret Morin and a band of devoted workers. But the difficulties that are seldom wanting to good works done from supernatural motives, soon showed themselves! Differences of opinion as to the kind of Rule to be adopted caused dissensions in the house, and Margaret Morin and several of the assistant workers left. In August, 1644, Père Eudes confided this important work to the Visitation Nuns, one of whom, Mère Patin, sedulously watched over the new Foundation during its first and most difficult years. The Community was given the Rule of St Augustine with certain modifications to meet its own special requirements, and the first postulant to be clothed was a young lady bearing the very historic Norman name of de Taillefer.<sup>1</sup> The Congregation of "Our Lady of Charity of Refuge" remained under the direction of the Visitation Nuns till 1666, when it was recognized by Alexander VII as a separate foundation. The Institute of Our Lady of Charity survived the Revolution, and in 1835, a branch of it was founded by Mother Mary of St Euphrasia Pelletier, Prioress of the Refuge at Angers, under the title of the Institute of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, and subsequently formed into a Congregation by Gregory XVI. The Good Shepherd Nuns opened their first house in England at Hammersmith in 1841, since which time they have increased their charitable work of rescue in this country, till at present their convents in Great Britain number nine.<sup>2</sup>

Ever since the period of the Council of Trent, great efforts have been made to improve the parochial clergy and to infuse everywhere a more apostolic spirit. This was very noticeable in France all during the reign of Louis XIII, and the movement had the powerful support of Cardinal Richelieu. Not only were ecclesiastical studies made more systematic, but greater attention was paid to the spiritual training of those who aspired to the altar. To aid in this epoch-making work, Père Eudes, in 1643,

<sup>1</sup> At the beginning of the Battle of Hastings, 14th October 1066, a gigantic Norman, named Taillefer, who seems to have combined in himself the qualities of warrior, minstrel and juggler, rode up to the English lines, all the while chanting the "Song of Roland," and throwing his ponderous sword into the air and adroitly catching it again by the hilt. After slaying two of the Saxons—probably thanes—this strange champion was himself killed in single combat by another of Harold's captains, whose name has not come down.

<sup>2</sup> Mère M. St E. Pelletier died at Angers, 1868. A very interesting "Life" of this holy Foundress has been written by Sister Mary St Sebastian of the same Institute (Good Shepherd), and will, no doubt, be issued shortly.

established at Caen the Congregation of secular priests that bears his name—"the Eudists"—though the official title is "The Congregation of Jesus and Mary." The members devote themselves to training the clergy, and sanctifying the people by missions and catechetical instructions, but in each case always under episcopal sanction. It was in connection with this work that the holy Founder made two journeys to Rome, chiefly to counteract the opposition which was raised against the project by the Jansenists and the French Oratorians, whom the former had by the latter part of the century so deeply infected with their principles. The Eudist Fathers, who have the direction of many seminaries in Belgium, Spain, South America and Canada, gave several martyrs to the Church during the period of the Revolution, notably the Abbé Hébert, sometime confessor of Louis XVI, massacred with eight or nine others of his Congregation at the Carmes, 2nd September, 1792.

From at least the days of St Bernard, who in his *Vitis Mystica* touches on the subject, there has been within the Catholic Church a growing devotion to the Sacred Heart of Our Lord, the symbol of the love wherewith "He loved them unto the end" (*St John* xiii 1). Though St John Eudes cannot be regarded as the Founder of the devotion in the modern sense, he must be counted as one of the leading pioneers. In fact, he is the author of the pious aspiration: *Ave Cor Sanctissimum, Ave Cor amantissimum Jesu et Mariæ*. He always linked the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary together, because they are united by the mystery of the Incarnation. His seminary chapel at Coutances was the first to be dedicated under this combined title.<sup>1</sup>

For fifty years the Saint continued his great apostolate of giving missions. Among the most noteworthy of these was one in the parish of St Sulpice in 1651, which lasted ten weeks and which effected much good. Twenty years later, he gave one at Versailles which was attended by Louis XIV and his Court. The Saint addressed the august assemblage with the same freedom as he would have used if preaching in some obscure country Church, and every one from *le Roi Soleil* downwards was edified, and some fruits worthy of penance were the result.

Such a series of labours—the almost incessant preaching, instituting Congregations, founding seminaries in different parts of Normandy, not to mention the administration of the Sacraments, incessant correspondence, etc.—now began to tell on the Saint. Yet almost to the last, he continued

<sup>1</sup> The Bull *Anctorem Fidei* of Pius VI, 1794, carefully explained in refutation of the Jansenist opposition—that Catholic devotion to the Sacred Heart was not to the mere physical heart, but to the heart intimately united to Our Lord's divinity. In other words, the honouring of the Sacred Heart is only another form of honouring the Sacred Humanity of the Saviour of the world.

to labour, and a few weeks before the end, noted down thanks to God in his diary for having enabled him to finish his great treatise: *The Admirable Heart of the Most Holy Mother of God*. Not long after this, he was taken ill, and recognizing that death was at hand, he spoke to those about him of the joys of eternity—those joys for which he had prepared such a multitude of souls! Having received with his habitual fervour the last rites of the Church, this great apostle of France of the seventeenth century rested in the Lord on 19th August, 1680. His virtues were declared heroic by Leo XIII, 6th January, 1903, and he was Beatified by Pius X, 3rd May, 1908, and Canonized by Pius XI, 1925. In addition to his spoken word, the Saint has left several treatises of great spiritual value. Of these, *Le Prédicateur Apostolique* and *Le Mémorial de la Vie Ecclesiastique*, are very well known, and they have been often referred to with commendation in works dealing with the life or duties of the clergy.

[*Sketch of the Life of the Venerable Père Eudes*, by the Rt. Rev. Bishop Hedley, O.S.B. (R. & T. Washbourne.) *St John Eudes*, by the Rev. Allan Ross. (Cath. Truth Society.) (Private information.)]

#### AUGUST 22

### LACY, THE BLESSED WILLIAM, PRIEST, MARTYR (? -1582)

WHEN the Sieurs Ilbert and Walter de Laci came from Lassy, Vire, Normandy, in the victorious army of Duke William, they little dreamt that they were to do something more than to figure on the "Roll of Battle Abbey." Their descendants or namesakes were, to a great extent, to people the north and west of England, and to add many of the ilk to Ireland as well. In the reign of Elizabeth a number of the stock in Yorkshire still clung to the faith of their Norman progenitors, and among these a well-known local lawyer, Mr William Lacy, whom it was currently reported might have been one of her Majesty's Judges at Westminster, but for the strong suspicion that, in spite of his occasional attendance at the Parish Church, he was really something more than a papist at heart. He was known to be very kind to mysterious strangers, whom rumour said were Massing-priests, some of "Queen Mary's priests" who had obstinately refused the Oath of Supremacy and had been ejected from their livings. Then in 1565, Dr William Allen, late Principal of St Mary's Hall, Oxford, made a tour of the north of England. The future Cardinal did more than admire the scenery of the moors and dales. He visited large numbers of

Catholics in Yorkshire and Lancashire, persuading them to be firm, "for the days were evil," and above all, exhorting them not to attend the "heretical conventicles" as the faithful now termed the desecrated Parish Churches, from which the Holy Mass and the traditional rites of Christendom had been cast forth. Among those whom the Founder of Douay is believed to have influenced, was Mr William Lacy. Anyway, his life henceforth was that of a recusant of the period! He came to Church, *i.e.*, the Parish Church, no more. He was fined to ruination, and even imprisoned at Hull. His house was raided by pursuivants and everything carried off, and for fourteen years, in fact, he experienced all the amenities that the apostasy of the realm from the faith of its fathers brought in its wake! His wife, worn out by these persecutions, was at length taken ill, but death soon mercifully removed her from scenes which were now going on all over England, because Catholics—as Sir Thomas More had expressed it—were unable to find that a lay person had been or could be the head of Christ's Church!

After the death of his wife, Mr Lacy, though somewhat advanced in years, resolved to study for the priesthood. He went to Rheims in June, 1580, and like St Ignatius Loyola more than half a century before humbly took his place in class with youths, carefully taking down the "Dictates" or dictated instructions on philosophy and theology, then and long after the method of imparting such knowledge at the English College. He did not stay long at Rheims, but went on to the English College, Rome, where he was ordained, apparently, the following year. He then returned to Yorkshire, and there, we are told, laboured with much fruit in a county where the Faith lingered long. He used also to visit the Catholic prisoners for religion in York Castle, and it was there that he was arrested, 22nd July, 1582. A priest there, the Rev. Thos. Bell, had not only said Mass in his cell very early that morning, but *sung it!* Such things could be done, and were done, in the prisons of that day, which, as before observed, were a strange mixture of cruel tyranny and negligent surveillance, and no doubt bribery was rampant everywhere. However, on this occasion, owing to the noise made by one of the prisoners, the alarm was given that some of the inmates were trying to escape. In the confusion, Mr Lacy managed to slip outside the Castle, but was taken, apparently on suspicion, under the walls. After a short examination at Thorpe, before the Puritanical Dr Sandys, Archbishop of York, and a great foe of the Catholics, he was loaded with fetters and placed in a dark dungeon of the Castle. On 11th August following, he was indicted at the Assizes for his priesthood. Among the evidence produced against him were his ordination papers. When asked by the judge what he thought about the Queen's supremacy, he replied: "With regard to this and everything else, I hold

the same belief as the Catholic Church of God and all good men." He was condemned to death, and suffered with great constancy at York, 22nd August, 1582.

## AUGUST 22

KIRKMAN, THE BLESSED RICHARD, PRIEST, MARTYR  
(? -1582)

He suffered at York, 22nd August, 1582, with the preceding, the Blessed William Lacy. Mr Kirkman was ordained at Rheims, 1579, and came on the mission in August of that year. He was Chaplain for some time to Robert Dymoke, Esq., of Scrivelsby, the Champion of England, but being compelled to leave that post for fear of arrest for his priesthood, proceeded to Northumberland. He was seized on the way near Wakefield, and a chalice and other Catholic articles being found among his baggage, he was committed to prison. He owned himself a priest, and the York Assizes being about to commence, was indicted and found guilty of (a) being a seminary priest of Douay or Rheims, (b) persuading the Queen's subjects to become Catholics. Upon hearing the sentence of death, he exclaimed: "Good God! how unworthy I am of it!" On the way to the York Tyburn on 22nd August, 1582, he and Mr Lacy heard each other's confessions as they lay on the hurdle together. When his turn to suffer came, he repeated the words of *Ps. cxix. Heu mihi! quia incolarum meorum prolongatus est: habitavi cum habitantibus Cedar: multum incola fuit anima mea.*

## AUGUST 22

KEMBLE, THE BLESSED JOHN, PRIEST, MARTYR  
(1599?-1679). Beatified Dec. 15, 1929.

THE *reductio ad absurdum* of the "Popish Plot" of 1679 was surely reached when the Rev. John Kemble, an octogenarian and very kindly priest, was arrested at Pembridge Castle, Herefordshire, as one of the alleged conspirators! That charge must have been, at least, part of the original accusation, in addition to his being a popish priest and exercising his sacerdotal functions within the realm, contrary to 27 *Elizabeth*, for after lying in Hereford Jail, he was ordered up to London for further examination. The Rev. John Kemble was ordained priest at Douay, 23rd February, 1625, and nearly all his missionary life was spent in Herefordshire, his native county. The Kemble or Kimble family originally came from Kemble in Wiltshire. George Kemble, mentioned among "the

principall and most dangerous Recusants in the diocesse of Hereford," 1604, was a near relation of the subject of this notice. After being examined in London, the Rev. J. Kemble was returned to Hereford for trial. The technical point upon which he was convicted at the Assizes was having said Mass at Pembridge, and such was the anti-Catholic furore throughout the country at the time, that the authorities dared not reprieve this venerable and amiable old man, who was accordingly hanged on Widemarsh Common, near Hereford, 22nd August, 1679. Mr Kemble, who was a great humorist, made light of his unjust condemnation in view of his great age, and therefore probable imminent death in the ordinary course of nature, and on the way to the gallows calmly smoked a pipe, hence the saying "Kemble's Pipe," to denote great presence of mind amidst danger! At the place of execution, he addressed the people saying: "Oates and Bedloe not being able to charge me with anything when I was brought up to London, though they were with me, makes it evident that I die for professing the old Roman Catholic religion, which was the religion that first made this Kingdom Christian, and whoever intends to be saved, must die in that religion." After the martyrdom, his body was given to his nephew, Captain Richard Kemble, who buried it in the churchyard of Welsh Newton. The spot became a place of pilgrimage, and among those who visited it long subsequently, were Charles Kemble, the famous actor, great-grand-nephew of the Martyr, and Mrs Siddons, his sister.<sup>1</sup> The hand of the Rev. J. Kemble is treasured in the Sacristy of the Catholic Church, Broad Street, Hereford, where there is also an altar known as the "Kemble altar," the reredos of which is made from the oak posts and boards of the bed of Bishop Matthew Pritchard, O.S.F., Vicar-apostolic of the Western District, who died May, 1750, *æt.* 81. A piece of linen, stained with the Martyr's blood, is at Downside. Among the cures alleged to have been wrought through the intercession of the Blessed John Kemble, were those of the daughter and wife (?) of that very Captain Scudamore who had been instrumental in arresting him! The daughter is stated to have been cured of a dangerous sore throat by the application of a piece of the rope used at the execution of the holy

<sup>1</sup> Roger Kemble, actor and manager (1721-1802), grand-nephew of the Martyr, married a Miss Ward, a Protestant. By an arrangement common until recent times, the sons of the union were brought up Catholics and the daughters in the mother's religion. Nearly all the sons were educated at Douay, the eldest, John Philip, afterwards the famous tragic actor (1757-1823), being there as a fellow-pupil with Bishop Milner (1752-1826). Unfortunately, none of the sons kept the Faith. Another branch of this old recusant stock were the Kembles of Abergavenny, one of whom, Mr John Kemble, was among those who took the Oath of Allegiance to George III as prescribed by the Catholic Relief Act of 1778.

See Percy Fitzgerald's *The Kembles* (1871); Rev. Dr Husenbeth's *Life of Bishop Milner*; *Cath. Rec. Socy.*, vol. ix.

man, while Mrs Catherine Scudamore was permanently freed from stone-deafness after praying at the Martyr's grave.

[Gillow: *Bibliography*. Challoner: *Memoirs*. *Cath. Record Socy.*, vols. ii and ix.]

*N.B.*—The Blessed John Kemble's grave in the churchyard of Welsh Newton, Herefordshire, is marked by an oblong slab of red sandstone with bevelled edges, slightly raised above the ground. The slab, which has been mended with two iron clamps, has the following inscription:

I. K. | Dyed the 22th | of August | Anno Do: 1679

Pilgrimages continue to be made to this sacred shrine, and on each anniversary of the martyrdom, the grave is decorated with flowers.

[See *Cath. Rec. Socy. (Obituaries)*, vol. xii. pp. 236–37.]

#### AUGUST 28

#### ARROWSMITH, S.J., THE BLESSED EDMUND, PRIEST, MARTYR

(1585–1628). Beatified Dec. 15, 1929.

THE various *aliases* used by our Catholic forefathers in the penal times have not made the identifying of many of the English Martyrs an easy task for their chroniclers. The subject of this notice, who was also known as Bradshaw and Rigby, and who was baptized as Brian, but when coming to years of discretion took the name of Edmund, was born at Haddock or Haydock, near Warrington, Lancashire. His father was a yeoman, his mother belonged to the Gerards of Bryn, ancestors of the present Lord Gerard. He studied at Douay, 1605–12, and after his ordination (9th December, 1612), returned to Lancashire. As a little boy, our missionary had had a bitter experience of the penal laws when, late one cold winter's night, a band of pursuivants had burst into his father's house, and after bundling the inmates out of bed, proceeded to stab with their swords the mattresses and Arras hangings of the rooms to see if any "Massing-priests" lay concealed! Such was an "Englishman's home," and such the amenities of Catholic life in England in the late Tudor and early Stuart days. Young Arrowsmith attended a grammar-school near his home, where his sweetness of disposition and diligence made him a great favourite with the Protestant masters. He entered Douay apparently on a bursary provided by the Holy See.



During his years of ministry in Lancashire he is described as being very successful with persons possessed with evil spirits, and he seems to have been very fond of controversy, but apparently without the bitterness which has made *odium theologicum* a byword. On one occasion as he sat at supper with the Bishop of Chester, the kindly Dr John Bridgeman (1577-1652), the subject of religion was introduced. Several Protestant clergymen were also at the table, so our priest said merrily to his Lordship: "Turn all your dogs loose against me and let us have a loose bait!" How the polemical "baiting" ended, history saith not. Probably the last round concluded with candles—"And so to bed!"

About 1622-3, Mr Arrowsmith was in jeopardy. He was arrested for being a priest, and very likely things would have gone hard with him, but for the fact that it was the year of the proposed "Spanish Match," and the adventures of "Steenie and Baby Charles" in Madrid. King James therefore from policy was inclined to be very lenient towards papists, so as to win the Infanta for his son. So orders went forth that all popish priests in custody were to be released, and among these benefited was Mr Arrowsmith.

His second and fatal arrest, in 1628, was at the instance of a young man of evil life whom the good priest had severely reproved, and who swore to be "even with his censor." This reprobate got a warrant of arrest from a Captain Rawthorn, J.P., and taking with him a band of rough fellows waylaid the priest as he was on his travels, and after using him very barbarously, brought him to an inn. He was duly committed to the Lancaster Assizes, where he was tried before Sir Henry Yelverton and a jury. Two indictments were drawn up against him, one for being a priest and Jesuit, the other for perverting his Majesty's subjects to the Church of Rome. The principal witnesses against Fr. Arrowsmith appear to have been all in great danger of being indicted themselves. For one of these was the infamous young man referred to above, who, in addition to other offences, was actually guilty of incest, while the other was this youth's mother, likewise involved in his crime! The reader can well imagine what figures this precious pair would have cut under cross-examination by, say, Mr Charles Stryver! But no such fell exposers of dark secrets was at hand, and Mr Arrowsmith was duly convicted on both counts. He was kept shut up in a gloomy cell until 28th August, when he was brought forth at noon to die for his priesthood. A great multitude of people filled the streets, and the procession to the gallows was headed by the executioner bearing a huge club! Upon going up the ladder, Fr. Arrowsmith kissed it, and before being turned off prayed for the conversion of England. The people showed much sympathy on this tragic occasion, many saying it was a barbarous thing to use folk so merely for their religion, while

others again "wished their souls with his." Fr. Arrowsmith having been admitted to the Society of Jesus before his death, is honoured in its Calendar as one of the Jesuit Martyrs.

*N.B.*—Sir Henry Yelverton, 1566-1629, was called to the Bar at Gray's Inn, and was Attorney-general, 1617-20. In 1625, he became fifth Judge of the Court of Common Pleas. A *Life of Father Arrowsmith*, published in 1737, states that while this Judge was at supper in his house in Aldersgate Street, London, on 23rd January, 1629, he felt two mysterious blows "from nowhere" on his head, and was carried in great terror to bed, where he died next morning! He was buried at Easton Maudit, Northamptonshire. The baronetcy conferred upon his son, Christopher, in 1641, became extinct in 1799.

[See Burke: *Extinct Peerage and Baronetage*.]

#### SEPTEMBER 2-6

### THE BLESSED MARTYRS OF SEPTEMBER (1792)

WHILE the most dreadful mob on earth—that of Paris—was making its furious attack on the Tuileries, 10th August, 1792, a shrewd young Lieutenant of Artillery, one day to be world-famed as Napoleon—stood looking on. He came to the conclusion swiftly, as was his wont, that coalesced ruffianism, despite its overwhelming numbers, was heading for a complete defeat! For the heroic Swiss Guard, though but 800 strong, had driven the sansculottes before them in a headlong flight that reached at its farthest point, the Pont Neuf! and the bayonets of these magnificent soldiers were rapidly completing what their heavy rolling and platoon fire had begun.<sup>1</sup> Then, with victory not only in sight, but assured, came the insane order of the *Roi Fainéant* to cease fire! Anarchy surged back in triumph, and the blood-stained and chaotic part of the Revolution was given a free hand! Next day the King and the Royal Family were in prison, the jails crowded with the supporters of law and order, and all in train for the horrible events that have added the ominous word *Septembriseur* to the French vocabulary.

Among the thousands of prisoners awaiting their doom, were about

<sup>1</sup> The second battalion of the Swiss Guard was then stationed at some distance from Paris. These deservedly famous household troops of the Kings of France were first raised in 1616 (Louis XIII), being chiefly recruited from the hardy mountaineers of the Swiss cantons. The uniform was red and white. Thorwaldsen's *Lion of Lucerne* commemorates the devotion and heroism of the Swiss Guard at the Tuileries, 10th August, 1792. At the second restoration of Louis XVIII, 1815, the Swiss Guard was reformed, but disbanded finally after the July Revolution of 1830.

160 clergy confined in the old Convent of the Carmelites in the Rue Vaugirard, as well as many others at St Firmin's Seminary, Rue St Victor, the Prison of La Force, Rue St Antoine and in the Abbaye near the Church of St Germain des Prés. Apart from the fanatical hatred of religion and royalty which inspired the Jacobins, the chief offence of these prisoners in the eyes of the now dominating faction in France, was their refusal to take the oath known as that of the "Civil Constitution of the Clergy."

From the very beginning of the Revolution, the Clergy, especially the parochial Curés—many of whom formed part of the Tiers État of the States-General—had frequently played the part of conciliators between the Commons and the Noblesse, as Carlyle fully admits.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the Clergy, to relieve the wide-spread distress at the time, had surrendered their tithes and national property. It is generally acknowledged that had the French bishops been allowed to draw up a workable Scheme of Church and State agreement, nearly all the subsequent trouble which arose would have been avoided! Instead of that, the Civil Constitution of the Clergy was passed by the National Assembly, and all ecclesiastics required under penalty of deprivation and subsequently, transportation, to swear to it. The new Constitution suppressed many dioceses, ordered the bishops to be elected by local assemblies of the Clergy, without any reference to the Holy See, though the Pope was to be informed of the election as a pledge of "unity of faith and Communion." Pius VI condemned the Oath as schismatical, and it speaks volumes for the loyalty of the French clergy that, in spite of the considerable amount of Gallicanism and Jansenism in the country, the great majority rejected the obnoxious law.

The anger excited throughout France at the invasion of the Prussian and Austrian armies—the avowed purpose of which was to subjugate the great national movement—rose to fury, when at the end of August, 1792, it was announced that the Allies had captured Longwy and Verdun. The presence of many French royalists with the invading armies added fuel to the flames, and on 31st August, bands of criminals and persons of the worst character began to assemble round the prisons clamouring for the blood of the "aristocrats," and "the enemies of liberty!" The departure of large bodies of patriotic citizens to the front, was made the excuse for an attack on the prisons, which were now described as hot-beds of anti-national intrigue. "Let us not become responsible," exclaimed Collot d'Herbois to the departing regiments, "for the murder of your wives and children, which the conspirators are preparing even in the prisons, where they are expecting their deliverers!"

Maddened by these falsehoods, the mob of assassins began their fell work. The first place to be attacked was the prison of the Abbaye, 2nd

<sup>1</sup> *History of the French Revolution*, book v. chap. i.

September. A ferocious crowd, armed with muskets, sabres, and pikes, and led by the fanatical Maillard, invaded the place about two p.m., and for nearly an hour the work of butchery went on. The twenty-four priest prisoners were called upon individually to take the Constitutional Oath, and upon refusal, death immediately followed. After the priests had fallen beneath bullet and blade, a mock tribunal condemned to death the rest of the prisoners, including the fifty-four survivors of the heroic Swiss Guard, and as sentence after sentence was passed, the victim was hurried out and shot or stabbed to death by the blood-stained savages, who then went to the *Mairie*, where they were rewarded by Pétion, Mayor of Paris, with money and glasses of wine !<sup>1</sup>

The "patriots" having completed their ghastly work at the Abbaye, then proceeded tumultuously to the Carmes, which they reached about three o'clock. The Clergy imprisoned there had been allowed to go out into the garden, and many were there when the assassins poured in. The first to fall was the Abbé Giraud, and then another priest. The rest tried to escape by hiding in various parts of the garden and even by climbing the trees, but with the exception of a few, all were discovered and murdered. Cries were raised for the Archbishop of Arles, who was known to be among the prisoners. With the courage and after much the same manner of St Thomas à Becket, that intrepid prelate confronted his murderers with the words: "I am he." He was set upon by a ruffian who, after dealing him several strokes with a sabre, ended by plunging it into his breast. The Bishop of Beauvais was soon to share the fate of the Primate of the Gauls, and of the other ecclesiastics whose bodies now lay weltering in blood in every part of the tragic garden of the Carmes. At this stage, the notorious demagogue, Maillard, appeared on the scene of horror, and ordered the massacre to cease for a while. The survivors were placed in the Church of St Joseph, and a kind of tribunal was instituted on the landing near the Sacristy. The prisoners were called forth two and two and the obnoxious Oath tendered to them. All refused to take it and were cut down by the Jacobin "executioners," who lined the staircase on each side. By six o'clock all was over, and with the exception of a few who managed to escape when the first attack was made, the whole of the prisoners had perished, martyrs of fidelity to ecclesiastical discipline.

The names of the principal victims who gave their lives on this tragic occasion were:

1. Jean Marie du Lau, Archbishop of Arles, born 1738 in the diocese of Saint Brieuc.

<sup>1</sup> Alison : *History of Europe*, vol. iii. chap. viii.

2. François Joseph de la Rochefoucauld-Maumont, born 1736. Bishop of Beauvais.

3. Pierre Louis de la Rochefoucauld-Bayers, born 1744. Bishop of Saintes.

4. François Louis Hébert, Superior of the Eudists, and Confessor of Louis XVI.

5. Jean Antoine Savine, one of the " Clercs " of St Sulpice.

6. Dom Ambroise Augustine Chepreux, Superior of the Benedictine Monastery of St Maur (Paris).

In addition to the foregoing also perished 10 Vicars-general; 1 Benedictine prior and 1 monk; 12 Jesuits; 7 old priests of the Retreat House at Issy; 49 chaplains and curates; 3 deacons; 1 acolyte and 1 Christian brother. One layman was also massacred with these, *i.e.* the Count de Valfronds, formerly an officer in the army.

The twenty clerics slain at the Abbaye, included: Armand Anne Auguste Antoine Sicaire de Chapt de Rastignac, Vicar-general of Arles, and several other Vicars-general.

The massacre at the Seminary of Saint Firmin took place on Monday, 3rd September. Among those slain were the Abbé François, Superior of the Seminary of Cambray; Abbé Michel Leber, Curé of the Madeleine (Paris); Abbé Joseph Marie Gros, Curé of Saint Nicolas du Chardonnet; Abbé Yves-André Guillon de Keranrun, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Paris.

The following died in the Prison of La Force:

Abbé Jean Baptist Bottex, Curé of the diocese of Belley, and a former deputy at the States-General (1789); Abbé Michel François de Lagardette, Vicaire de Saint Gervais, Paris; Père Hyacinthe le Lévêc de Trésurin, Jesuit, and former Chaplain at the Convent of the Filles du Calvaire.

Of the 213 or so bodies of the victims, many were buried beneath a yew-tree in the garden of the Carmes, while about 60 others were interred in the Cemetery de Vaugirard. Another 50 were cast into a pit at the back of the Oratory. These last were disinterred in 1867, and placed in the Crypt of the Chapel of St Joseph, which was erected as a memorial to the many clergy who died in this fearful slaughter. The Institut Catholique, close by the scene of the martyrdoms, treasures many interesting souvenirs of this moving tragedy, the inspiring memories of which continue to draw to the spot large numbers of pilgrims annually even from the remotest parts. Pope Pius VII in a memorable encyclical referred to the victims as " Confessors of the Faith," but it was not until 1901 that Cardinal Richard, Archbishop of Paris, caused the evidence to be carefully collected with reference to the victims of the September Massacres and the future introduction of their cause at Rome. In the course of 1906, twelve folio

volumes, filled with narratives of the holy lives and virtues of the sufferers were forwarded to the Holy See, and the same year the Bishops of France sent an address to the Holy Father praying for the near beatification (*le voeu d'une glorification prochaine*) of these eminent servants of God. The cause of the Martyrs was announced at Rome as officially introduced, on 18th January, 1916, and on 17th October, 1926, the Martyrs were declared Blessed by Pius XI.

[*Almanach Catholique Français pour 1927.* (Paris: Bloud et Gay.)  
Alison: *History of Europe*, vol. iii. Carlyle: *History of the French Revolution.*]

## SEPTEMBER 7

(1) DUCKETT, THE BLESSED JOHN, PRIEST, MARTYR  
(1613-1644). Beatified Dec. 15, 1929.

(2) CORBIE,<sup>1</sup> S.J., THE BLESSED RALPH,  
PRIEST, MARTYR  
(1598-1644). Beatified Dec. 15, 1929.

1. JOHN DUCKETT's family, "a very antient and worthy one," originally came from Westmoreland, but was settled at Sedbergh, Yorkshire, at the time of his birth. If it be true that he was bred a protestant in his early years, he may have been a pupil for a time at the famous school of his native place, which Roger Lupton, D.D., Provost of Eton founded in 1528.<sup>2</sup> However that may have been, he was not very far advanced in his studies when he went to Douay, for he was placed in the "Humanities" Schools. He afterwards passed through the philosophy and divinity course *magno cum plausu omnium*, as the time-honoured phrase then went. Mr Duckett seems to have been a man of very ascetic mind, for we hear of him spending whole nights in meditation, and before coming on the English mission, he passed some time with the English Carthusians at Nieuport, where his cousin, Fr. Duckett, was Prior. He was not long labouring in England. He was taken by some Parliamentary soldiers on 2nd July, 1644, the very day of the battle of Marston Moor, which ruined the Royalist cause in the north. He was seized while on his way to baptize two children, and when searched, his *Ordo Administrandi* and holy oil stocks were taken as evidences of his priesthood. After much delay, during which he was more than once threatened with (unofficial) torture to make him own that he was a priest, he was sent to London.

<sup>1</sup> Spelt also Corby.

<sup>2</sup> Lupton died 1540, and was buried in his Chantry at Eton. An endowment for prayers for the Founder's Soul which was forfeited as for "a superstitious use," was *mirabile dictu!* restored to Sedbergh by an Order of Council, November, 1552 (Edward VI).

At the trial at the Old Bailey (September 1644), he boldly confessed his priesthood to the Recorder, Mr Serjeant Glynne (Pepys's *Rogue and Turncoat*!), which seems to have settled the matter with the Puritan jury which at once found him guilty. There was some attempt made to get him off by exchanging him for a Scottish Lt.-Col. under sentence (of death?) in the German Empire, and also by trying to prove that he, the condemned, was a native of Ireland and so amenable to the laws of that Kingdom. But the overtures fell through, as the Puritan Faction then in power was implacable. Great interest was evinced by the "quality" in the execution of the good Father and that of his fellow sufferer Fr. Corbie, S.J., for the martyrs were attended to Tyburn by such personages as Don Antonio de Sousa the Portuguese Ambassador, the French Ambassador, and the Duchess of Guise. This last lady expressly returned to town from Dover to receive the counsels of the holy man. Mr Duckett died in his priest's cassock, a circumstance which was hailed at the time as something of a "favour" on behalf of the authorities.

2. RALPH CORBIE, or CORBY, S.J. When the persecution again became very hot in England, after the year of the Armada, 1588, the parents of Ralph Corbie, who lived in Durham, finding things unbearable in their own country, migrated to Dublin the better to enjoy the practice of the Catholic religion. There Ralph was born, 15th March, 1598, and at the age of fifteen he went to St Omer's, which, after finishing his classical course, he left for the College of the English Jesuits at Seville. He completed his divinity studies at Liège. In 1631-2, he came on the mission in Durham, and there under the name of Carlington, proved himself a very zealous worker among the large numbers of Catholics in that county. For twelve years, he travelled about the country administering the Sacraments, saying Mass and exhorting his co-religionists to be steadfast in the Faith. He was arrested when on the way to say Mass at Hampsterley, 8th July, 1644, by a body of Cromwell's soldiers, and was brought to London with the preceding priest, Mr Duckett, with whom he was tried and condemned. The Sheriff, though an ardent Puritan and very fierce against "the Papist dogs!" would not allow the butchery part of the sentence to be performed on the priests till they were both dead, which shows that that worthy official's bark was worse than his bite! As in the case of Fr. Duckett, the martyrdom was attended by the Catholic Ambassadors and their suites, and after the tragedy, the cassock of Fr. Corbie was recovered and removed as a precious relic of his zeal and constancy.

SEPTEMBER 9

CLAVER, ST PETER, "THE APOSTLE OF THE NEGROES"  
(1581-1654)

PETER CLAVER was twenty years of age and had left the University of Barcelona when he decided to enter the Society of Jesus. He was received in August, 1602, and completed his novitiate at Tarragona. After a year's further study of the classics at Gerona, he went to the College of Montesion at Majorca, where report was already busy with the sanctity of a holy lay-brother, Alphonsus Rodriguez, who was said to have the gift of miracles, and who solved knotty problems in casuistry and philosophy by a knowledge certainly not acquired from mere books! This Brother soon saw in the newly arrived scholastic a man upon whom the finger of God was already set, and he prophesied that he would go to the Indies and there carry out a wonderful apostolate. In due course, Peter Claver left Spain for New Grenada, 1610, and after some sojourns at Santa Fé and Tunja, returned to the first-named place in 1615, was ordained priest there, and almost at once began the marvellous work for ever to be associated with his life. Ever since 1500, the evil trade in negro slaves from Africa to the Spanish possessions in America had been going on, the gold mines and the plantations of the settlers being made the pretext for the horrible traffic.

The *sacra auri fames* had set at naught the protests of popes and casuists against this revival of one of the worst abuses of the pagan world, and by 1616, nearly a thousand slaves arrived every month at Cartagena, which, owing to its geographical position had become the established "Clearing House" of the vile commerce. The unfortunate negroes thus imported, were the subjects or captives of petty African Kings, who did a regular business in human lives, and the most frightful phase of the nefarious affair, was the dreadful "middle passage" across the Atlantic. The wretched living cargoes were herded together in the holds of large slave ships called "Armazones," and by the time the six or seven weeks voyage was accomplished, fully half the miserable beings on board had died of squalor, disease and misery. When the vessels reached port, the scenes at landing are described as almost impossible to exaggerate! Nearly all the negroes were ill, owing to the hardships and horrors of the voyage, and many died within a few days or even hours of being brought to shore. Already, however, the Jesuit Fathers at Cartagena had begun the glorious work of succouring the poor captives. Father Alonso de Sandoval was in charge of the crusade of mercy, and under him, Fr. Peter Claver commenced his apostolate. Fr. Sandoval, time



after time denounced the horrible trade, and wrote against it, but in vain. All the Fathers could do was to alleviate as far as possible the sad lot of the slaves, and trust to time and grace for the awakening of the public conscience on the matter. Fr. Claver organized bands of assistants and as each slave ship arrived, he and his workers hastened to meet it, bearing with them food, medicines and delicacies, and welcoming the poor half-dead creatures with words of kindness and comfort. The Sacraments were at once administered to the dying, and as soon as the survivors were fit to receive it, simple instruction in the truths of faith, was given by the zealous Father not only to all the slaves collectively, but individually. He got together a band of interpreters and catechists, and the lessons of the Catechism were repeated over and over again, till they were fully comprehended by the black pupils. Even after these had left the Slave-compounds at Cartagena for the plantations, they were not forgotten.

The Saint and his assistants kept in touch with them as far as possible, so that the good work thus begun was perpetuated. A short but beautiful prayer taught to the negroes by St Peter Claver and often repeated by them, runs as follows: "Jesus Christ, Son of God, Thou shalt be my Father, my Mother and all my good. I love Thee much. My soul is grieved at having offended Thee. Lord, I love Thee much, much."

When not engaged in attending to his "children," as he called the slaves, this wonderful apostle devoted his time to the care of the European sick in the hospitals of the city, and to hearing confessions. He is said to have often spent fifteen hours at a time in the holy tribunal, and he frequently prepared condemned criminals for death. His mortifications and austerities equalled these related of the most ascetic of the Saints! Besides his heroic courage and patience in attending to the poor negroes month after month, submitting to nauseous sights, and stench arising from putrifying wounds, neglected disease and filth, he had to put up with much opposition from the white population, especially the slave merchants and planters, who to salve their indurated consciences, tried to make out that the negroes had no souls, and that the Saint's labours were therefore wasted! When seized with his last illness, Fr. Claver realized that his death was at hand, for he said to Brother Nicholas Gonzales who attended him: "I am going to die!" The news that "the Apostle" was nearing his end quickly got abroad, and next day, after the last rites had been administered, crowds of persons, rich and poor, came to the sick-room to beg the blessing of the venerated friend of suffering humanity. The place was soon stripped of nearly everything portable which was carried away as treasured relics. On the 8th of September, 1654, the Feast of the Nativity of Our Lady, the "Oracle of Cartagena," as he was called, passed away. It is estimated that during

the nigh 40 years of his stupendous missionary activity he had baptized more than 300,000 negroes in addition to almost innumerable courses of instructions and the administration of the other Sacraments. Declared Venerable by Leo XII in 1825, he was Beatified by Pius IX, 16th July, 1850, and Canonized by Leo XIII, 15th January, 1888. Finally, on 7th July, 1896, he was declared by the Holy See, Patron of all missionary enterprises for the conversion of the negroes, in Africa, America and elsewhere.

[An interesting and edifying study of the life and labours of S. Peter Claver will be found in *Aethiopum Servus*, by M. D. Petre. (London : Osgood, McIlvaine & Co., 1896.)]

## SEPTEMBER 10

SPINOLA, THE BLESSED CHARLES, S.J., MARTYR  
(1564-1622)

THE Blessed Charles Spinola (Carolus Spinula) was born at Génes near Prague, 1564, and on 25th December, 1584, entered the Noviciate of the Society of Jesus. His abilities were very marked, and for two years he taught Latin Grammar, and then mathematics over a period of three years more. In or about 1609 he was "asked"—not, apparently, "ordered"—to go to Japan, where the Jesuits were making distinct advance in the conversion of that far-off empire. He acquiesced, and for some twenty years laboured for souls with great results, but he also devoted, it seems, a certain amount of time to astronomical inquiry, for in 1612, he wrote a technical account of an eclipse of the moon as seen at Nagasaki; which account was afterwards published in the *Transactions* of the Royal Academy of Science, vol. viii., p. 706 (Paris?). Astronomy was much cultivated by the Jesuits at that time, both in Japan and China, chiefly as a means of winning over the natives to whom the subject, apart from its mythological and astrological aspects, was quite new.

When the great persecution of 1622 broke out, Fr. Spinola and seven other members of the Society of Jesus were burnt alive at Nagasaki; and with them also suffered many Japanese Christians, men, women and children. For the circumstances of this dreadful event and of the other martyrdoms in Japan, see under 5th February. A Latin *Life* of the Blessed Charles Spinola, who was beatified by Pius IX in July, 1867, was written by Fr. Fabius Ambrose Spinola, and there is a notice of the Martyr in the *History of the Christian Religion in Japan* by Léon Page (Paris 1870). Many of the details related there as elsewhere, are taken from the Correspondence of the great Missionary, which is rather abundant, and covers a variety of topics all throwing much light on the

heroic effort that was made to win the land of the Rising Sun to the Kingdom of Christ.

*N.B.*—The names of the other Jesuits who suffered with the Blessed Charles Spinola are:

- (1). Sebastian Kimura, born at Firando, Japan, 1565.
- (2). Thomas Acafoxi, *scholastic S. J.*, born 1572.
- (3). Louis Cavara, born at Arima, Japan, 1582.
- (4). John Ciongocu (or Tchoungocou), *scholastic*, born 1582.
- (5). Gonsales Fusai, *scholastic*, born 1582.
- (6). Anthony Kiumi, *scholastic*, born 1572.
- (7). Michael Xumpo, *scholastic*.

The feast of the Blessed C. Spinola and his companions is kept in the Calendar of the Society of Jesus, 10th September, the day of their martyrdom.

#### SEPTEMBER 12

### ANCINA, THE BLESSED JUVENAL, BISHOP OF SALUZZO (1545-1604)

THE Blessed Juvenal Ancina, from the fact that he was a Doctor of Medicine in addition to his other learned qualifications, is reckoned with St Luke and Saints Cosmas and Damian, as one of the holy patrons of the medical profession. His name Juvenal seems to have been given to him from the fact that he was born at Fossano, Piedmont, while prayers were being offered up to St Juvenal of Narni (*d.* 369), the ancient spiritual guardian of the City. The family of the Blessed Juvenal belonged to a good Spanish stock, and both he and his brother Giovanni were, as children, noted for their devotion to Our Lady and for playing at being priests. Having sufficiently advanced in his Latin studies, Juvenal went when about fifteen years of age, to the University of Montpellier for the purpose of commencing his medical studies at the famous school of medicine which ever since its foundation by the refugee Arab doctors and savants from Spain, 1180, had been much resorted to from all over Europe. While there, young Ancina made friends with two students collaterally descended from St Roche (*d.* 1348), and he never omitted to hear Mass daily and to keep up all his accustomed exercises of piety. This was all the more necessary, as Montpellier at that time was a stronghold of Huguenot activity. So much so, that not long afterwards the Duke of Savoy ordered all his subjects to return from there and the South of France generally, lest they should be infected with the bitter Calvinist heresy

which sought not toleration but domination. Ancina therefore, resumed his studies at Padua which was at that time even more distinguished than Montpellier. Among the advanced contrivances then lately adopted for the purpose of teaching anatomy and physiology, were accurately designed and correctly coloured wax models, illustrating various sections of the human body, a method which has since become general all over the world of medical and surgical instruction. Having taken the degrees of M.D. and Ph.D., respectively at Turin, Ancina was appointed professor of medicine at the latter University. He only held this important post a very short time.

It is said that it was hearing the chanting of that very moving Sequence, the *Dies Irae* at a requiem at Savigliano, that determined the young Professor to turn his mind to the priesthood. He commenced the study of Theology under the illustrious Bellarmine, afterwards Cardinal, and at Rome decided to enter religion. He first thought of the Carthusians, but was at length advised by St Philip Neri to join his own foundation, the Oratory to which both he and his brother were admitted in October, 1578. Upon hearing that the already famous young Professor of Medicine had entered, Baronius is reported to have exclaimed: "To-day we ought to be most grateful to God, for we have become acquainted with a second St Basil!" As a novice, Ancina showed himself wonderfully submissive and obedient. He delighted in performing menial offices such as sweeping the Church, cleaning the altar candle sticks, etc., besides practising a number of mortifications in secret. He was soon set to give discourses, and his preaching was found to be most effective. A number of persons were reclaimed from lives of sin or carelessness, and in fact so many conversions were brought about, that Ancina became known as the "Son of Thunder." In 1586, being now a priest, he was sent to be Superior of the Oratory at Naples, on its first foundation. As at Rome, his pulpit discourses attracted crowds, and the fruit as before was abundant, including the happy change of life of a beautiful sinner, Giovanna Sancia, popularly known as "The Siren!" Another great gift of the Blessed Juvenal was that of healing political and social dissensions, and under his soothing influence many unhappy family feuds were ended. As a writer he had, before this, distinguished himself in Latin poetry, and his effusions were sufficiently excellent to be looked upon as among the best of the kind in an age when thanks to "Ciceronianism," most educated persons wrote the tongue in the best style of the Tullian epoch. While at Naples, he drew up by request the proper Office and Sequence for the feast of St Januarius, the ancient patron of the City.

It was about this time that the Blessed Juvenal formed the design of founding an order of priests for the purpose of preaching to high and low

alike the truths of Salvation. It seems to have been the idea which St Alphonsus Liguori carried out in the Redemptorists in 1731. The notion, however, was much opposed by the Oratorians, and Pope Clement VIII, who probably learned the facts of the project from St Philip, ordered the prospective Founder to remain where he was and sanctify himself and souls in the Congregation of St Philip.

After the death of St Philip, Fr. Ancina returned to Rome as Superior of the Oratory there. Already rumours were busy with his name as bishop of Nice or Vercelli, and to avert the threatened mitre, the good Father went into a kind of hiding, by sojourning with different religious Orders. When staying at San Severino, he received a message from Clement VIII bidding him return which he did, resuming his spiritual labours and also making the acquaintance of, or rather forming a strong friendship with, St Francis of Sales, Prince-Bishop of Geneva.

On 26th August, 1602, he was expressly nominated Bishop of Saluzzo by Pope Clement VIII. Already when walking along the road near Fermo upon one occasion, he was told by a soldier whom he chanced to meet, that he would one day be a bishop, which "prophecy" the good Father treated as a jest, though the prognostication was now confirmed by another remark from a gardener who observed, that such an appointment must be the Will of God, and that it ought to be taken "as it comes." Fr. Ancina was consecrated on 1st September, 1602, by Cardinal Borghese who three years later ascended the pontifical throne as Paul V. The place of the ceremony was the Church of St Maria in Vallecella.

As bishop, the Blessed Ancina showed his wonted zeal but in an even more intense form. He preached not only in the Churches, but in the public squares. During the Carnival time he gave the spiritual exercises to divert people from sinful amusements, and he used his well-known powers of peace-maker to establish and promote goodwill among people at variance. He found his diocese, which Julius II made immediately dependent on the Holy See, in a very sad plight. The region like most of the others in the North of Italy, had not recovered from the awful demoralization that was the bitter legacy of the wars of the Emperor Charles V and Francis I of France (1522-46), while the Reformation in Germany, Switzerland and France, had sadly injured the religious fervour and even belief of the people. Morals were corrupt, the Clergy slothful, negligent and occasionally scandalous, and the Churches slovenly and uncared for. Added to this were a number of pagan customs which undermined piety and made general improvement very difficult. To remedy this deplorable state of things, the new bishop began with prayer. He ordered the devotion of the "Forty Hours" to be observed in all the Churches. He next withdrew spiritual faculties from all priests and ecclesi-

astics not having the care of souls, and saw that none were appointed to cures who were not leading edifying lives. He caused lists of books suitable for the instruction of the clergy to be circulated and where the incumbents were too poor to provide these, he defrayed the cost himself. At the diocesan synod of 1604, he caused stringent rules to be drawn up for ecclesiastical guidance, and the more devout and regular ordering of the Services of the Church. A Seminary for ecclesiastical students was established, and arrangements made for systematic instruction of the people, especially the young, in the truths of faith and Christian morality. Meanwhile the zealous pastor was setting a brilliant example by his own conduct. He cut down the expenses of the episcopal household, wore violet serge instead of silk, and confined his own personal requirements to almost the bare necessities of life. Spiritual reading was introduced at the principal meals, while the few hours not given to prayer, study or work for souls, were spent in resting not on a comfortable bed, but a rough straw couch. In addition to this, his Lordship practised other severe forms of penance, fasting much, for instance, and constantly wearing a hair-shirt.

Having "put his house in order" at home, the Bishop's next care was the visitation of his diocese. St Francis of Sales who met him at Carmagnola, during the progress of this laborious itinerary, has left on record his impression of the holy prelate and his work. "I perceived," wrote the great Doctor of the Church, "what reverence and love his piety and many virtues had excited amongst these people!" This Lion of the Fold of Judah visited the most remote places of his diocese. With the zeal of the illustrious Saint and bishop of Geneva just quoted, he wished to preach the faith to the Calvinists of Switzerland, but owing to the great and imminent danger there was of his assassination at the hands of these fiercely hostile people, the Pope refused his consent.

The labours of the Blessed Juvenal were almost in every detail a reproduction of these of St Charles Borromeo thirty years before. But stupendous as these were, they could not effect everything. The scandals and immoralities which were so rife at this period in many parts of the north of Italy, owing to the causes already referred to, were not to be ended in a day, even by the self-sacrificing endeavours of a Saintly prelate! In fact, the evils in question were indirectly to prove his death! Just as the life of St Charles was attempted by a wicked monk, so that of the Blessed Juvenal was actually taken by a depraved friar! There was in Saluzzo at this time, a Franciscan of notoriously evil life, and in revenge for the disciplinary measures which the Bishop was intending to enforce against him, this wretch resolved to murder the object of his hate. One day in August, 1604, as his Lordship entered the Church of St Bernard

belonging to the Franciscans at Saluzzo, the assassin handed him a poisoned cup which the bishop with his usual courtesy accepted and drank, and not long afterwards was taken very ill.<sup>1</sup> He lingered for a few days, but finding his end approaching, received the last rites of the Church with great fervour gave his blessing to his sorrowing household, and died peacefully in the Lord, 31st August, 1604, aged 59. This appalling crime, needless to add, caused an immense sensation at the time. The Pope dispatched his Nuncio, Mgr. Tolosa, to Saluzzo to take immediate steps to reform or even suppress, whatever houses of religious that might be still causing disedification. The perpetrator of this atrocious murder was brought to justice, and it was remarked as a species of divine judgment, that the family of the wretched criminal not long afterwards became extinct.

The soul of the holy bishop and Apostle of Saluzzo is said to have appeared to two persons after his death. His venerated remains repose in the Cathedral of the City, to the spiritual betterment of which he had contributed so much. The cause of his Canonization which was introduced at Rome not long after his decease, was postponed from time to time, so that it was not until 9th February, 1889, that he was declared Blessed by Leo XIII. In addition to the Latin poems already referred to, the Blessed Juvenal Ancina has left a valuable treatise on the devotion of the "Forty Hours," which is regarded as one of the chief authorities on the subject.

[*Life of the Blessed Juvenal Ancina*. Edited by Fr. Charles Henry Bowden of the Oratory. (Kegan Paul, 1891.).]

SEPTEMBER 17

ARBUES, ST PETER, MARTYR

(1441-1485)

WILHELM VON KAULBACH, whose realistic paintings have done so much to illustrate the progress of the world, has left behind him at least one grotesquely misleading canvas, *i.e.* that representing or rather misrepresenting St Peter Arbues. The creator of "The Mad House" and the "Battle of the Huns," has depicted a hoary-headed tyrant, a sort of fifteenth-century ghoulish gloating over his victims like a primitive Gothic chieftain exulting over the stricken legions of some vanquished Consul! The fact that the Saint was one of the first Inquisitors—much against his will!—has obtained for him this artistic notoriety, but the facts, from first to last,

<sup>1</sup> The poison was probably the notorious *Aqua Tofana*, a colourless, but deadly preparation of arsenic, then much used in Italy for removing unwanted people!

give the lie to these purely imaginary embellishments. Peter Arbues was born in 1441, the son of noble parents, Don Antonio Arbues and his wife Sancia Ruiz. His philosophical studies were made at Huesca, the ancient Osca, where Sertorius trained the Celtiberian youth in the Roman arts of peace and war. At the Spanish College of St Clement, Bologna, he completed his divinity course, gaining there the reputation of a most devout and diligent student. Deciding to enter religion he made his solemn profession among the Canons Regular of St Augustine at Saragossa, in 1474. By this time, the future Saint was already well known, not merely for his wide and exact learning in Scripture, theology and canon law, but still more, for his great amiability and unfailing kindness to the poor.

Peter's religious profession, very nearly coincided with the establishment in Spain of that Inquisition which has been made the subject of so much misrepresentation, and very often by those who certainly had every means of knowing the truth. Long before this time (1478)—for centuries in fact—there had been growing up in the country a powerful class, or rather two powerful classes, known respectively as the "Maranos" and the "Moriscos." The first were convert Jews, the second convert Moors. They were very wealthy and influential. The favour and policy of many Kings had raised numbers of each body to positions of great influence, both in Church and State. Members of both sections sat at the royal council board, managed the royal revenue, and even became archbishops and bishops! While many both of the Maranos and Moriscos were sincere and upright men, it was the reverse in the case of the rest. Multitudes were not only utterly dishonest in their profession of Christianity, but they were actually aiming at the overthrow of Spanish nationality and the introduction of Judaism and Mahomedanism on its ruins! To detect the sham converts from the genuine ones, the several rulers of Spain obtained from Pope Sixtus IV. permission to establish a Court for inquiring into and punishing heresy, especially the political form of heresy just named, which had become such a menace to the very existence of the nation. The Pope in granting the request, caused stringent safeguards to be laid down to protect individuals from abuse. The Judges of the new tribunal were to be men of mature age, proved learning in theology and canon law, and unimpeachable character. No arrest was to be made until the guilt of the accused was apparent, and false witnesses were liable to be put to death. Unconverted Jews and Moors were not to be molested, and accused persons were to have Counsel and every facility to make their defence. The prisons were not dark dungeons as nearly always represented—but light, well-ventilated rooms, and there was the right of appeal to Rome in the last



instance.<sup>1</sup> It must be remembered that apart from the special circumstances in Spain, heresy in those days was a civil crime everywhere, and one especially feared by the several states of Europe, as it was almost invariably associated with sedition, rebellion, civil war and the destruction of life and property!

The Lollards of England in Henry V's time were deeply leavened with Communism. The "Reformers" of England, Germany and notoriously Scotland, in the succeeding Century, were cynical plunderers and wanton iconoclasts. Even if the Spanish Inquisition had done nothing more than save the country from such spoilations as those of the rapacious councillors of Edward VI—not to mention the awful vandalism of Knox and his "Saints!"—it would have fully justified its existence as a national institution. But it did more. It saved not only the artistic inheritance of Spain but its faith. The decadence of the country which set in at the latter part of the eighteenth Century, was due, not to the Inquisition, but to the shallow rationalism, which, imported largely from France, soon withered true learning and killed all depth of thought.

This somewhat lengthy disquisition is necessary to explain many of the circumstances relating to the life of St Peter Arbues. Nominated, as before stated, Inquisitor of Aragon (1484), he, in spite of the calumnies so largely based on the now discredited assertions of Llorente, performed the judicious duties of his office with the greatest leniency. So much so, indeed, that during his administration, only *one* person was sentenced to death, and one other arrested. Several others *may have been* put to death by the court of which he was an official, but it was not through his instrumentality. Besides, the grave abuses which have made the Spanish Inquisition so odious, had not arisen at that time. The institution had not degenerated into an engine for private revenge and extortion, and the papal injunctions and warnings against injustice and cruelty were still regarded.

In addition to their aim at exclusive political power, the Maranos, especially, were honeycombed with vices, the most glaring of which were the moral corruption (of youth), perfidy (notably perjury) and usury. St Peter was never weary of preaching against these grave social evils, which if unchecked, soon effect the ruin of every society. He not only denounced these practices, but was ever zealous to correct the wrong

<sup>1</sup> All this may be compared with the condition of accused persons in this country even a century later and well into the eighteenth century. Not only were jails in England dens of horror, but the accused were kept months waiting for trial, were not allowed counsel to address the jury, and did not have their witnesses examined on oath. Catholic prisoners for religion, during the reign of Elizabeth, were even worse off, for they were tortured in many instances before trial, and their utterances on the rack, etc., were used as evidence against them.

by careful instruction. His attitude as the public enemy, so to speak, of the class in question, led to a formidable conspiracy being formed against him. A sum of about ten thousand réals was collected by the leaders of the Marano party in Aragon, and a band of hired assassins bribed to murder the Inquisitor on the first opportunity. This came about when Father Peter—according to one account—was praying before the altar of Our Lady in the (old) Cathedral Church of Saragossa, after reciting divine office in choir. The three murderers, led by Juan de la Abadia, entered the sacred place, and so severely wounded the Saint with their daggers that he died two days afterwards (17th September, 1485). The great affection and veneration which had been shown by the faithful to the deceased during his life, were increased a hundred fold by his tragic death. His intercession was constantly invoked as that of a holy martyr who had fallen *sub gladiis impiorum*, for the sake of truth, justice and religion, and many cures and other favours were piously believed to have been granted through his intercession. He was Beatified by Alexander VII, 1664, and Canonized by Pius IX, 29th June, 1867, the same day as St Paul of the Cross, Founder of the Passionist Congregation.

[Guggenberger: *General History of the Christian Era*, vol. ii.]

#### SEPTEMBER 21

### THE BLESSED MARTYRS OF COREA (1839-1866)

CATHOLIC missionary priests are stated to have entered Corea as far back as 1632 (Alzog: *Ch. History*, vol. iv), but no sustained effort was made to plant the Faith in the country till about 1783, when some Corean magnates who had been to Pekin in the embassy from their Sovereign, were converted by the Jesuit missionaries there, and in turn these envoys acted as apostles to their countrymen. By 1795, the number of Corean Catholics amounted to 4000, and they had but one priest among them, a Chinese named James Tijou. A severe persecution arose in 1801, and on 20th May of that year, a native Christian, Alexis HOUNG, was tortured to death. The priest Tijou was exiled, and the abandoned flock sent a pathetic petition to Pius VII imploring the Holy Father "in virtue of the merits of our martyrs to send us priests at once!"

The Napoleonic wars and the grave troubles afflicting the Church in Europe prevented the Pope from hearkening to the bitter cry, and for nearly thirty years Corea remained a land without clergy, Mass or Sacraments, except the lay baptism that the native Catholics gave each

other! Not until 1831, was Corea made a Vicariate by Gregory XVI, the first Bishop to be appointed being Mgr. Brugière. It is, however, chiefly with his successor, Mgr. Laurent Joseph Marius Imbert, and his heroic colleagues, that this notice is chiefly concerned.

Laurent J. M. Imbert was born in the Diocese of Aix in Provence, 23rd March, 1796. During his boyhood he made rosaries for a living and also to defray the cost of his education. Having received the Minor Orders at Aix, he entered the College of Foreign Missions at Paris, October, 1818, and was ordained priest there, December, 1819, and in March the following year left for the Chinese mission. After his arrival, he laboured for 12 years at Se Tchoan, with much fruit, meanwhile acquiring a good working knowledge of Chinese. After the death in 1835 of Mgr. Brugière who had been Coadjutor Bishop in Siam, Père Imbert was chosen as his successor, but was not consecrated as Titular Bishop of *Capsa* till 14th May, 1837. He was unable to cross the Corean frontier till the following December, but once there, made many conversions. It is said that between 1837 and 1839 the number of native Catholics in Corea increased from 6000 to 9000, in round numbers.

Bishop Imbert had for his chief assistants two very zealous and holy priests, Père Pierre Philibert Maubant and Père Jacques Honoré Chastan. Père Maubant (born at Vassy, 1803), had been Curate (Vicaire) at Gast before entering the Society of Foreign Missions in November, 1831. Père Chastan, also born 1803, at Marcoux, entered the Society of Missions in January, 1827, and from 1828 to 1836 had been employed in missionary work at Macao. With Père Maubant was also associated a young native student Andrew Kim, said to have been descended from one of the ancient Kings of Corea. Both he and several members of his family subsequently gave their lives for the Faith. After the death of Mgr. Brugière, Mgr. Imbert and his fellow labourers began their apostolic work, but they had scarcely commenced to inaugurate their labours when they were accused to the King of Corea of promulgating Christianity. To avert a general persecution of the small Christian Community, Mgr. Imbert surrendered himself to the authorities and later advised Pères Maubant and Chastan to do the same. They were all cast into prison at Séoul, as enemies of the State and ordered to be put to death. The three martyrs were carried on chairs to an open space by the river that flows through Séoul, and fastened back to back to a post upon which was suspended a title giving their names and the cause of their death. They were then ceremoniously beheaded by a number of soldiers circling round them with scimitars. Their bodies were recovered after three weeks, and buried on the summit of a lofty mountain. They repose now in the Cathedral Church of the capital, Séoul. These martyr-missionaries were declared Venerable by

Pius IX in 1857, and Blessed in 1926 (Pius XI). After their death no priest, apparently, remained in Corea, but in 1843, Andrew Kim already referred to and who had been pursuing his studies at Macao, succeeded in entering the country, and he was able to prepare the way for the arrival of Mgr. Ferréol, the successor of Mgr. Imbert. Mgr. Ferréol ordained Andrew Kim at Shanghai, 17th August, 1845. Next year Père Kim was arrested by the Corean authorities and put to death in the same way as Mgr. Imbert and the others (16th September, 1846). Bishops Berneux and Davelvy and seven priests and many of the laity shared his glorious fate during the great persecution of 1866, and again for ten years the Corean Church was bereft of Clergy. Not until 1882, was the country legally opened to foreigners, and since then, Catholicism has made very good progress, the number of native Catholics being now about 80,000 under four Vicars-Apostolic. The Churches number about 60, and the schools and orphanages over 80. The priests are chiefly from the Society of Foreign Missions (Paris), the Bavarian Benedictines, and the Missionary Fathers of Maryknoll. On 2nd November, 1904, the remains of various Martyrs of Corea numbering over 80, were translated to the Cathedral of Séoul (consecrated 29th May, 1898), where they are venerated by the large body of faithful Catholics which has arisen largely as the result of the labours and sufferings of their heroic predecessors.

[*Le Catholicisme en Corée*: published by the Procure du Séminaire des Missions Étrangères, 128 Rue du Bac, Paris. Rev. F. W. Faber: *The New Glories of the Catholic Church*. (London, Richardson & Son, 1859).]

#### SEPTEMBER 24

- (1) SPENSER, THE VENERABLE WILLIAM, MARTYR
- (2) HARDESTY, THE VENERABLE ROBERT, MARTYR  
(?-1589)

1. A REFERENCE in vol. v. (p. 34) of the *Cath. Record Society* which states that "William Spenser of the diocese of York, arrived at Rheims on the 2nd of November, 1582, and was received into the Church on the 7th of the same month," makes it clear that the Martyr was a Convert. William Spenser was born in the Craven district, West Riding of Yorkshire, but was educated under his uncle, an old "Queen Mary" priest at Chipping Norton in Oxfordshire. After this, he proceeded to Trinity College, Oxford, where he took the M.A. degree, and became Fellow in 1580. Though he had outwardly conformed to Protestantism, he remained

Catholic at heart, and is said to have encouraged many wavering youths to embrace the Faith. Falling under the suspicions of the Authorities, and being much troubled in conscience, he left the University and was reconciled to the Catholic Church at Rheims, as stated above. He was ordained there presumably in 1584, and after returning to England, resolved to bring his parents back to the old religion. As the persecution was now very severe and spies extremely numerous, he had to go to them disguised as a labouring man, but as the result of his instructions, he had the happiness of seeing both his father and mother enter the Church. The next object of his solicitude was his uncle, the old Marian priest. This ecclesiastic, like so many others at that time had accepted a benefice in the Elizabethan establishment, while saying Mass in secret! His nephew was able to convince him that such a course was not only unworthy, but utterly unlawful, so the old temporizing priest resigned his living, and retired as Chaplain into a Catholic family. Having thus well and successfully begun the good work with his own relations, the zealous missionary then turned his attention to the many Catholic prisoners for the Faith in York Castle. He visited these confessors frequently, and afforded them the consolations of instruction and sacraments. Like the Rev. Ralph Corbie and the Rev. John Duckett, more than half a century later, he was arrested while on a missionary journey, by Sir William Mallory, and confined in York Castle where he had so often been on visits of mercy to the Catholic prisoners. He was condemned to death at the Summer Assizes, 1589, for being a priest and exercising his office in this country contrary to 25 *Elizabeth*, chapter 2, and suffered with great constancy for the Faith on 24th September, together with the following Mr Robert Hardesty.

2. ROBERT HARDESTY or HARDESTIE, a young man of known piety, was arrested together with the foregoing on suspicion of having harboured and relieved him. At his trial at the York Summer Assizes, the only evidence against the accused, was that he was known to relieve Catholic prisoners in the Castle. This and the circumstance of his arrest in company with the priest was enough for the jury, which convicted the prisoner of what was then a felony. Mr Hardesty was hanged at York, together with the Venerable William Spenser. During his captivity this courageous and charitable young man prepared himself carefully for death by much prayer and deep meditation, and so far from accounting his seizure as a misfortune, he looked upon it as a great grace and the crowning favour of his life!

[*Cath. Record Socy*, vol. v. Challoner: *Memoirs*. Gillow: *Bibliog. Dic. Eng. Catholics*, iii.]

SEPTEMBER 25

CONSTANZO, S.J., THE BLESSED CAMILLO  
(CONSTANTIUS CAMILLUS), MARTYR IN JAPAN  
(1570-1622)

FATHER CAMILLO CONSTANZO was born at Motta Bovolina (Calabria), and entered the Neapolitan Province of the Society of Jesus, 8th September, 1591. He went to the Indies in 1602, and thence to Japan, where he laboured for nine years, making many converts and acquiring a competent knowledge of the language. He was arrested in the course of 1611, and exiled. Retiring to Macao, he spent the time there in spiritual ministrations, but always seeking an opportunity of returning to the Japanese Mission. This occurred at last, and disguised as a native soldier, he re-entered the country, but was again arrested and sentenced to death. He was burnt over a slow fire at Firando, on 15th September, 1622. With him also died for the Faith, some others, part of that great body of 205 Japanese Martyrs, beatified by Pius IX, 7th July, 1867. Fr. Constanzo is said to have written some apologetical works in defence of the doctrines of the Church against the calumnies and misrepresentations of the native population amongst which he laboured. He also addressed several letters to various personages, including Fr. Mutinus Vitelleschi (15th January, 1618).

[C. Sommervogel: *Bibliothèque de la Compagnie de Jesus*, tome ii.  
Archives of the Neapolitan Province.]

OCTOBER 3

ST TERESA OF LISIEUX "THE LITTLE FLOWER"  
(1873-1897)

NATIONS, communities, individuals have their favourite Saints devoutly supplicated and tenderly loved, but there is probably no Saint, certainly none in these more recent times, who has taken captive the mind of the Catholic world more completely than the girl Nun of Lisieux, "The little Flower," whose name is household in hundreds of thousands of homes. Vast numbers of persons imbued with devotion, and even very many of little or no religious belief, have felt the enormous attraction of the holy soul which, even amidst the fitful fever of modern life, has left behind an example of heroic virtue, childlike faith and affectionate sympathy

which are in so many mysterious ways fulfilling the cherished resolution of the maiden Saint of always "doing good on earth!"

Marie Françoise Thérèse Martin was born on 2nd January, 1873 at Alençon, the historic Norman town that always recalls, at least to educated English minds, the carnage of Agincourt, and the gallant death of the Duke whose sword so nearly ended Henry V's life! Little Thérèse was the youngest of the five surviving children of Monsieur and Madame Martin, jewellers, and also proprietors of a business for the manufacture of the much-prized Point d'Aleçon lace. Both father and mother were most excellent Catholics, and unlike so many people in the commercial world in France, they never failed to observe the Sunday rest, in addition of course, to the devout fulfilment of their other religious duties. Their youngest child was an ideal little maiden, deeply pious of soul and always charming in her radiant beauty and innocence. The things of God and eternity seem to have come home early to her, for in the wonderful Autobiography that she was to write later on, in obedience to her Superior, she tells us that "from the age of three, I have refused nothing to the good God." When Thérèse was four and a half, she and the rest of the family had the misfortune to lose their good mother, who died 28th August, 1877. About three months after his wife's death, M. Martin who had done very well in business, left Alençon to live at Lisieux, so that his little daughters might have the care of their maternal Aunt, Madame Guerin. Madame Guerin had two daughters, Jeanne and Marie. The latter was Thérèse's great friend, and afterwards became like her, a Carmelite Nun.

After settling at "Les Buissonnets" their comfortable home at Lisieux, two of M. Martin's daughters, Celine and Leonie, went as day-pupils to the Benedictine Convent of the town, while Thérèse remained at home with her father and elder sisters, Pauline and Marie. This latter was the little mother of the house, but it was Pauline who gave Thérèse her chief instructions in religious knowledge, and the child certainly proved an apt pupil. She showed an almost precocious intelligence for everything that pertained to the faith, and when quite a tiny mite, had once greatly astonished, and no doubt equally diverted, her good parents by informing them with the intense gravity of childhood, when really in earnest, that she wished them both to die since that was the only way of going to heaven! When Thérèse was eight, she joined her sisters as a day-boarder at the Convent. Next year (October 1882), her sister Pauline became a Nun at the Carmelite Convent, Lisieux. This event in the family history made a deep impression on Thérèse, who felt the first stirrings of what was to be her vocation, and in a burst of confidence she communicated her yearnings to the Rev. Mother of her sister's Convent. Of course,

the would-be postulant of nine was smilingly bidden "to wait till she was older," a non-committal reply which at least contained the germ of hope, and one that Thérèse never lost sight of, but meantime her own life came within measurable distance of ending. Shortly after her ninth birthday, she became very ill, and for a considerable time lay between life and death. The pious father, sisters and relatives of the sick child made a novena to Our Lady of Victories whose statue stood in the sick-room, for the recovery of the little sufferer, who joined fervently in the devotions. She must now tell her own story of what occurred one day. "All of a sudden the statue became animated. The Virgin Mary became beautiful . . . her face was radiant with sweetness, goodness and ineffable tenderness . . . Then all my pains vanished. The holy Virgin advanced towards me, she smiled upon me, how happy I am, thought I to myself, but I will not tell anyone for my happiness would then disappear."<sup>1</sup>

In 1886, Marie the eldest sister like Pauline, left her father's house and entered the Carmelite Convent at Lisieux, and from this time Thérèse's desire for the same holy life was increased tenfold. Over a year later, she spoke at length of this ardent wish to her good father, who like the true Catholic he was, refused to stand in his little daughter's way, severe though the sacrifice must have been to him. It was during this solemn conference which took place in the garden of "Les Buissonnets," that M. Martin, plucking some small lilies, gave them to his little daughter as tangible proofs of God's wonderful forethought and providence. But a would-be postulant however much on fire with zeal and devotion, is ineligible for any Order or Congregation under sixteen years of age, and though M. Martin might be willing, neither the Rev. Mother of the Convent, nor the Bishop of the diocese (Bayeux) would entertain the idea. Little Thérèse was bidden to possess her soul in patience. Next year, a French pilgrimage went to Rome for the Jubilee of the great Pope, Leo XIII. Among the pilgrims were Thérèse and her father, and at the public audience at the Vatican, the little maid, greatly daring, made her way through Cardinals, Monsignori and Noble Guards, and at the feet of the Holy Father, earnestly besought him to use his pontifical authority and allow her to obtain her heart's desire and enter the Carmelites without delay. The Pope, though doubtless quietly amused at the eagerness of the youthful postulant *in posse*, gave her a kindly, but indefinite answer accompanied by his blessing, and so the persevering little maid had to continue to pray and hope. But her reward was at hand. So much zeal had triumphed, and on 28th December, 1887, the feast of the Holy Innocents, Thérèse obtained the consent of the Bishop of Bayeux, (Mgr. Hugonin) to enter as a novice, the Carmelite Convent of Lisieux, the following April. This she did, and she received

<sup>1</sup> *Life*, p. 37.



the holy habit, 10th January, 1889, and made her solemn profession as Sister Teresa of the Infant Jesus, 8th September, 1890.

Such a severe Order as that of Carmel must have been a great ordeal to a young and delicate child of fifteen, but hard as the life was, Sœur Thérèse lived up to the sentiment of her holy request made on the day of her clothing. "May Jesus, grant me martyrdom either of the heart or of the body, or rather give me both!" How heroically she persevered in this attitude of mind and heart, we learn from her *Life*, where she tells us: "I have reached the point of not being able to suffer any more because all suffering is sweet to me!" At the very early age of twenty-two, Sœur Thérèse was appointed Mistress of Novices, though without the formal title. This important post was of course not sought by her. She realized all the great difficulties, actual and implied, for she says: "As soon as I entered the Sanctuary of Souls, I saw at once that it was a task beyond my strength, and so throwing myself very quickly into the arms of God, I imitated little children who, when frightened, hide their heads upon their father's shoulder, and I said: 'Lord I am too little to feed thy children, if Thou wishest to give them through me that which is suitable for each of them, Thou must fill my hand!'" Besides, her extraordinary holiness which was already the admiration of the Convent, Sœur Thérèse had the invaluable gift of recognizing what was the character and disposition of every soul thus given to her charge, and what was best for each individual case. She could, however, when necessary, rebuke as well as encourage, though chiding, however mild, went against the grain of the gentle administratrix, as indeed it always does in the case of affectionate and generous natures, the prophet Jonas for instance.

Despite her natural great delicacy, Sœur Thérèse fully observed all the fasts and other penitential exercises of the Rule, except where some of these were slightly relaxed to meet the conditions of her never very robust health. About April, 1896, however, she began to have obvious symptoms of the mortal illness which was so soon to remove her from this life. She felt a sort of holy joy when she realized that these signs—hæmorrhage, frothing at the lips etc.—were the harbingers of her "approaching entry into everlasting life."

The eighteen months of earthly existence that still remained to her, were full of those trials which Almighty God often permits to try even the greatest of His elect. Doubts against the Faith, fits of depression and intense dryness of soul, to mention but some of these, were the lot of the Little Flower in her last days. That sweet title seems to have come to her through the incident of the lillies in the garden, already referred to, and also, no doubt, through her own promise: "After my death, I will make a shower of roses fall to earth."

During the few weeks that remained to her of life, Sœur Thérèse also spoke these consoling words: "I feel that my mission is now to begin—my mission to bring others to love the good God as I love Him, and to give to souls my little way of trust and self-surrender. I will spend my Heaven in doing good on earth. This is not impossible since the Angels from the very heart of the Beatific vision, keep watch over us. No, I shall not to be able to rest till the end of the world. But when the Angel shall have said: 'Time is no more!' then I shall rest, and be able to rejoice because the number of the elect will be complete."

The wonderful little Nun of Lisieux passed to her eternal reward, 30th September, 1897. Her last words: "My God . . . I love Thee" were a sort of epitome of a life, the story of which was so soon to edify and console millions. In obedience to her Superior, she had some months before, drawn up the *Autobiography* which appeared, 1898, under the title of *L'Histoire d'une Ame*. Edition after edition in the various countries of the world testifies to the excellence of a personal narrative which has been compared for its force and pathos to the *Confessions* of St Augustine! "I opened the book here and there," wrote a presbyterian minister, "and was at once arrested with the beauty and originality of the thoughts. I found there had fallen into my hands the work of a genius as well as of a theologian and poet of the first order."

From the year almost of her holy death, the *cultus* of the "Little Flower" commenced, and in a decade it had swelled into a great volume of fervour and enthusiasm. During the World-War, 1914-18, scores of thousands of soldiers, French, British, American, etc., etc., invoked the protection of their "little Sister from Heaven," "the Second guardian Angel of Soldiers," as Sœur Thérèse was affectionately styled, and the piles of votive offerings—Crosses of the Legion of Honour and other decorations, not to mention rings and ornaments of every description heaped about the Shrine of Lisieux, bear eloquent witness to the ardent devotion of this vast army of warrior clients. Meantime, the miracles and other spiritual favours attributed to the intercession of the deceased, were also mounting up. These comprised cures of distressing maladies and manifold "answers to prayer." So universal was the devotion to the "Little Flower," that the Holy See dispensed in her case with the rule of Urban VIII and the Code of Canon Law, requiring fifty years to elapse before the process of canonization of a deceased person can be commenced.

The Venerable Thérèse of the Infant Jesus was solemnly beatified, on 29th April, 1923, in St Peter's. A month before this, a great procession was held at Lisieux in honour of the approaching event, at which, it is estimated, over fifty thousand persons took part! These included large numbers of French officers and soldiers, and a detachment of the American

Legion, while a chosen corps of the military acted as a guard of honour to the coffin of the holy Sister which was transferred on this occasion from the cemetery to its present resting place in the Convent Chapel. The crowning tribute of the Canonization followed on 17th May, 1925, the two further miracles required for the purpose having been duly proved before the Sacred Congregation of Rites. The joy that then filled the great basilica of Christendom has since overflowed into the whole Catholic world, one of the many instances, doubtless, of that "Shower of Roses" from the heavenly garden with which the beloved little Saint of Lisieux promised to refresh the faithful on earth.

OCTOBER 11

LEONARDI, St JOHN, FOUNDER OF THE CLERKS REGULAR  
OF THE MOTHER OF GOD<sup>1</sup>  
(1541-1609)

THIS great labourer in the restorer of ecclesiastical discipline in the sixteenth Century, was born at Deccimo (Republic of Lucca), of parents who belonged to the commercial class. After acquiring the rudiments of a general education, including Latin, he entered the service of a chemist or apothecary at Lucca, but after some years left, what was notably at that time, a very flourishing business in Italy, to study for the Church. He was ordained priest on 22nd December, 1574. Leonardi entered upon his sacred career just at the period when the beneficial reforms of the Council of Trent were beginning to awaken both ecclesiastics and lay people to the need of greater personal sanctity if the wounds inflicted by the Reformation were to be healed. Even before his ordination, John Leonardi had led a very mortified life, practising a variety of austerities and praying long and often with uncommon fervour. He now rented the Church of Santa Maria della Rosa at Lucca, to be used as the centre of devotion for a band of pious laymen who had been drawn to him by the amiability of his character, his sanctity, and the lofty ideals he had in mind for the betterment of individuals. Some of these persons began to study for the priesthood under his direction, and a religious congregation was proposed. But no sooner did the report of this project get abroad, than the government of the Republic—which like that of ancient Athens,

<sup>1</sup> *The Book of Saints*, by the Benedictines of St Augustine's Abbey, Ramsgate, states somewhat vaguely, that St John Leonardi was "canonized in the twentieth century." The "Acta Apostolicæ Sedis" for 1922 (p. 308), styles him "Beatus Joannes Leonardi." A leading liturgical authority consulted by the author, thinks the statements regarding the Canonization as "possibly a chain of error!"

was very suspicious—vetoed the idea, not from any anti-religious motive. it seems, but from the fear that a religious Order would in time spread over Italy and perhaps Europe, and that a foreign element might be introduced in to the State detrimental to its interests. It is difficult to see how such a notion ever came to be entertained, but such was the case, and so strong did the feeling become, that the would-be founder had to leave the country! Fr. Leonardi betook himself to Rome, and explained the situation to the Pope, Gregory XIII. The idea of the foundation was very similar to that already set on foot by St Philip Neri. It was to win souls to God by popular instructions and devotions, and the encouragement of those healthy forms of amusement very necessary at a time when the paganism of the Renaissance had introduced into many quarters diversions not at all in keeping with Christian ideas! Meanwhile and with the utmost secrecy, Fr. Leonardi acquired in Lucca itself the Church of Santa Maria Nera and three years later the foundation was canonically erected into a Congregation by his Holiness Pope Gregory XIII under the title of the "Congregation of the Clerks Secular of the Blessed Virgin." In 1621 the name was changed to that of "Clerks Regular of the Mother of God," and the members were permitted by Gregory XV to take solemn vows. The Congregation during the course of a century after the holy Founder's lifetime, spread to various towns of Italy, *e.g.* Rome, Naples, etc. In fact, it has remained an almost exclusively Italian foundation, the only house abroad being at Monte Carlo, opened in 1873.

The Church in Rome, that of St Maria in Campitelli, acquired by the Clerks in 1662, is interesting to persons of British nationality, as being the first titular Church of Prince Henry Benedict Stuart, Cardinal Duke of York, on being called to the Sacred College in 1747. The Church of the Congregation at Lucca that of St Maria Nera (or Cortelandini), has also its interest, for there in the Sacristy was long preserved the hair-shirt of St Thomas of Canterbury, half of which in 1908 the good Fathers very magnanimously presented to the Benedictines of Erdington.

St Philip very generously befriended the Saint and his good work, and before very long the "Clerks Secular," like the Fathers of the Oratory, were visibly transforming society. One of the Saint's first postulants was a young shoemaker named Georgio Arrichini, whose life hitherto had been the reverse of edifying. Another was Count John Baptist Cione, since declared Venerable. The Founder was never tired of exhorting his Fathers to cultivate kindness and cheerfulness, and to win sinners rather by an excess of mercy than any show of severity.

Though much tried during life through political suspicions, Fr. Leonardi had the satisfaction at the time of his death, 9th October, 1609,

of seeing his work firmly established. His remains were deposited in the Church of St Maria Campitelli. He was declared Venerable in 1701 (Clement XI), and Blessed in 1861 (Pius IX). In 1893, the Mass and Office of the Blessed John Leonardi were ordered by Leo XIII to be said by the Clergy of Rome—an honour hitherto reserved for the Beatified Popes! For the statement regarding his alleged Canonization, see footnote on page 406.

St John Leonardi also wrote several works of religious instruction well designed for popular use, and these in conjunction with the active labours of the Congregation, did much to effect the beneficent changes already referred to. He was Canonized by Pius XI in 1938.

[*Roman Breviary Supplement*, 11th October.]

OCTOBER 16

MAJELLA, ST GERARD, REDEMPTORIST  
LAY BROTHER  
(1726-1755)

WHEN St Gerard Majella—"One of those angelic youths whom God has given to the world as models to men," as Leo XIII styled him, entered upon his short life, the eighteenth Century had already commenced its second quarter. The epoch of soulless deism and dull "self-evident truth," was the age blessed by a Saint whose life-story reads like the record of some thaumaturge of the ages of faith. Gerard Majella, the only son of two worthy parents, Dominic and Benedicta Majella, was born at Muro, a charmingly situated town about fifty miles from Naples, 6th April, 1726, and was baptized the same day by the Archpriest of the Cathedral. At the age of eight, he went to school where he made such progress in the "three R's" that his master, Donato Spicci placed him as a kind of assistant teacher over the other children. Meanwhile he was advancing far in holiness, paying many visits to the Blessed Sacrament and showing remarkable devotion to Our Lady. Though the Jansenistic influence of the time affected even Catholic areas, and often made the practice of frequent Communion rare, yet such was Gerard's fervour, that he was soon allowed to communicate daily. Gerard's father was a tailor and he, too, followed the same trade under one Martin Pannuto, from whose foreman, a rough, unfeeling fellow, the young apprentice had much to suffer. He learned his craft very thoroughly and eventually set up in business for himself. Prior to this, however, he acted as servant for three years to the Bishop of Lacedogna, a prelate who also suffered from fits of

bad temper! Both there as well as in the tailor's shop, under the cruel foreman, Gerard showed great patience and even sweetness, so that he became the wonder of everyone. He heard Mass every morning and kept up his frequent visits to Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament—"the Prisoner of Love," as he termed the great mystery. He gave away to the poor most of his earnings *not required for the support of himself, his mother and three sisters, for his father had died in 1738.*

When Gerard was twenty-three, sixteen Fathers of the Redemptorist Congregation gave a great mission at Muro. The young tailor, who had long wished to lead a life of perfection in some religious house, now offered himself to the Fathers as a lay-brother, but was refused on the ground, apparently, of weak health. At length, after considerable delay, he was accepted by Fr. Cafaro at Rionero, and was admitted into the Redemptorist House at Illiceto on 17th May, 1749. Such was the extraordinary fervour of the new novice, that St Alphonsus Liguori, the Founder of the Congregation, shortened the novitiate of "this miracle of obedience," and he was professed, 16th July, 1752, adding, by special permission, to the usual four vows of Poverty, Chastity, Obedience and Perseverance, a fifth, to do whatever was most pleasing to God. Such was the marvellous sanctity of the youthful lay-brother, and such the wonderful graces, favours and even miracles, that seemed to attend him everywhere, that he was often sent with the Fathers when they gave missions and retreats. Brother Gerard seemed to be able to discern the state of souls by a certain kind of holy instinct. More than twenty instances of this marvellous gift are recorded with reference to secret sinners. These persons were total strangers to the Saint, and some of them were even regarded locally as individuals of advanced holiness! Yet to each Brother Gerard at once revealed the true state of affairs, and sincere repentance happily followed.

When not assisting the Missions and Retreats, or giving holy counsel to religious communities, Brother Gerard was engaged in begging for the Congregation—*itself a very irksome task*—or in serving the Community as tailor, cook, infirmarian or sacristan. The great trial of his life came in 1754. Among those to whom Gerard had given spiritual advice and even aided to enter a Convent, was a young woman named Neria Caggiano. She did not remain long in the Convent, and after leaving it, led a wanton life in the world. At the instigation of one of her paramours, she accused the young lay-brother of hypocrisy and immorality, and the serious charge was referred to St Alphonsus then at Nocera. To the astonishment of the Founder, Gerard, when sent for, said nothing to exculpate himself, and was of course in consequence, half believed to be guilty. He was treated with great rigour, forbidden to go to holy Communion, and for some months was in disgrace. The Saint remembering Our Lord's

silence before Pilate, and his own vow to do what was most pleasing to God, bore the unmerited, dreadful suspicion with heroic patience. Before long his accuser made a public avowal of her horrible calumny, when all the members of the Community—in the words of the great Founder of the Redemptorists—recognized that, in the wonderful lay-brother they possessed a great Saint. In June, 1754, Gerard was sent to Caposele where he superintended the building of the Redemptorist house. It was here that he obtained, in answer to earnest prayer before the tabernacle, a sum sufficient to pay the workmen their wages, at a time when there was absolutely no money in the house. He continued to work wonders—curing the sick, expelling evil spirits and making known to various persons the secret state of their consciences, as well as discerning for others the vocations God wished them to follow.

The health of Gerard, always on the weak side, became very bad in July, and by August, the doctors pronounced that consumption had set in. When told of this, the holy patient replied with his usual cheerfulness "It is the will of God, therefore let us rejoice, for we should always do God's will with joy." The end was not long in coming. On 5th September, he received the last rites of the Church and as the priest (Fr. Buonama), held the Sacred Host before the dying Brother, the latter said: "Thou knowest, O my God, that whatever I have done or said, all has been done and said for Thy glory. I die content in the hope that I never sought anything but Thy glory, and the accomplishment of Thy most holy will." A few days later, to the surprise of all, he appeared to get better, but in October, the blood-spitting returned. On the feast of St Theresa (15th October), he received holy Viaticum for the last time. A deep ecstasy then came on, during which, it is believed, that he saw Our Lady, for he exclaimed at the outset: "The Madonnal let us pay her due honour." He passed to his eternal reward shortly after midnight on the 16th, aged twenty-nine years and six months.

The wonderful spiritual fragrance of his short life was befittingly represented at his death by a most sweet and indescribable odour which filled for several days not only the room where he died, but the whole Monastery at Caposele. Like many another famous Saint, Gerard Majella was long in being raised to the altars of the Church, but the delay, as indeed is generally the case, was part of that scheme of divine providence which appropriates the man to the hour that most needs him! Gerard Majella was Beatified by Leo XIII, the great Pontiff of the *Rerum Novarum*, in 1893, and Canonized by Pius IX, 11th December, 1904, at a time when the labour world was entering upon that critical phase which still hangs around its destiny. It was fitting, therefore, that this young working-man, whose whole object in life had been how best to please God,

should have been acclaimed by the Church as the Saint of working-men and their great model in all that really matters, at the very period when the proletariat of the world stands confronted by its latest and seemingly most baffling problems.

[Rev. O. R. Vassall-Phillips: *Life of Blessed Gerard Majella* (1893).  
F. M. Capes: *St Gerard Majella* (C.T.S.). *Life, Virtues and Miracles of Saint Gerard Majella, Redemptorist Lay-Brother*—  
Written specially for the Canonization, by Rev. F. Magnier,  
C.S.S.R. (Catholic Book Co., Belfast.).]

OCTOBER 17

### PINOT, THE BLESSED NOEL, MARTYR (1747-1794)

THIS holy priest, one of the many martyrs of the great Revolution, was born at Angers, 19th December, 1747. After his ordination, he became chaplain to a hospital for incurables in his native city, and in September, 1788, was named rector (Curé) of Louroux-Béconnais, a town of very considerable size in the diocese. He led there a life of great holiness, and was famous for his charity to the poor. On 30th January, 1791, he was arrested at the conclusion of High-Mass, for refusing to take the schismatical oath of the "Civil Constitution of the Clergy," and though condemned to exile a few days later, was eventually permitted to retire to Corze, where he acted as Curé. In November of the same year he returned to Louroux-Béconnais, but owing to the increasing violence of the Revolution, had to flee to Saint Macaire en Mauges (1793). The Vendean conflict was then raging, but the Abbé Pinot took no part in the struggle. He went about among the faithful of the district in disguise, saying holy Mass at dawn, and administering the Sacraments by stealth. The Apostolic pastor was at length captured by the Republican soldiers on the night of 10th February, 1794, at a village called La Milanderie, where he lay hid in a chest (*huche*) shaped like a coffin! He was sentenced to death by a military commission on 21st February, and went to the guillotine the same day, arrayed in his sacerdotal vestments. At the foot of the scaffold the devoted priest repeated the opening words of the Mass: *Introibo ad Altare Dei!* and so died a martyr of fidelity to ecclesiastical discipline. His body was reinterred in his parish Church in 1853, and his cause began to be seriously inquired into eleven years later, with a view to canonization. The Abbé Pinot was declared Blessed by Pius XI, 17th October, 1926.

[*Almanach Catholique Français pour 1927*. (Bloud et Gay, Paris.).]



OCTOBER 17 (or 25)<sup>1</sup>ST MARGARET MARY ALACOQUE  
(1647-1690)

IN the *Life of St Gertrude* by the Carthusian Lanspergius, surnamed "The Just," it is recorded that the famous Abbess once asked St John the Evangelist who had appeared to her, why it was that he, the Beloved Disciple, had written nothing concerning the Sacred Heart, and was informed that that devotion was reserved for the last times, to rekindle the flame of Charity grown cold. (*Life*: book iv., chapter 4). The Sacred Heart of Jesus, the symbol of the burning love with which He loves us unto the end (*St John* xiii. 1), has indeed rekindled a great fire of devotion throughout the Catholic world during the past two centuries and a half, and while arousing an intense personal love for Our Lord, has also powerfully furthered the adoration of the Holy Eucharist.

St Margaret Mary Alacoque, to whom under God is so largely owing these widespread religious developments, was born at Lantecour, a village of Burgundy, 22nd July, 1647. Her father, le Sieur Claude Alacoque, a judge and a very devout Catholic, died when Margaret was eight years old, and for some years, owing, it seems, to the misconduct of a near relative, the family, consisting of Margaret, her mother and four brothers, suffered from very straitened circumstances. Eventually most of the ancestral fortune was recovered, but meantime the children were largely dependent on others. Margaret was educated at the Convent of the Urbanist Nuns at Charolles, and while there, began to have spiritual experiences. These included a distaste for childish amusements, and a love of recollection and prayer. It was about this period, too, that she made a vow of Chastity to God, though, as she tells us, not knowing at the time the meaning of the words! In all these confidences we are strongly reminded of Newman's early religious thoughts and phases as described in the *Apologia*. Though intensely spiritual, and even at this time cheerfully putting up with all kinds of daily troubles and untoward occurrences for the love of God, Margaret when about seventeen, to please her mother and brothers, went to balls and gaities, but was weaned from amusements that were not for her, by the vivid representation that she had of Our Lord crowned with thorns. She seemed to hear the words: "I chose you for My Spouse, and you promised mutual fidelity when you made the vow of Chastity, before the world had any place in your heart." Owing to the prevailing spirit of Jansenism, perhaps, confirmation was much delayed in those days in France, for Margaret was twenty-two before she received

<sup>1</sup> These alternate dates are given in the Roman Breviary.

this Sacrament. Its reception seems to have determined her to follow what she had for some years regarded as her vocation, *i.e.* to serve God in religion. After much deliberation, it was settled, that she should apply for admission to the Convent of the Visitation at Paray-le-Monial and as soon as she had entered the place, 25th May, 1671, one of her mysterious voices seemed to say: "This is where I will you to be."

The Convent at Paray was at that time, according to Fr. Dalgairns, in a rather relaxed condition, and Margaret Mary had much to suffer—from "the degenerate daughters of St Francis."<sup>1</sup> She was long regarded as a visionary and even as one actuated by motives of spiritual pride! Some devotions which she practised as acts of expiation for small faults committed by the Community were resented as insults to the house! But from at least the day of her profession, Sister Margaret Mary knew that if her favours and graces were great, her sufferings were to be commensurate, for she says: "My Divine Master urged me incessantly to ask for humiliations and mortifications." And again, when her own Spiritual Sisters seemed to be turning against her, Our Lord made known to her His will thus: "I have paid you great honour, My Daughter, for I have made use of noble instruments to crucify you, whereas My eternal Father delivered Me into the hands of executioners to be crucified."

The intense devotion of Sœur Margaret Mary to Our Lord's Passion and to the great mystery of the Blessed Sacrament, were now to be wonderfully rewarded. From 27th December, 1673, commenced those great visions and revelations which were to have such a bearing on the whole Catholic world. One day when praying before the Blessed Sacrament and deeply penetrated, as usual, with a sense of the presence of God, Our Lord showed Himself to her in visible form. "Behold" said He, "My Heart, which is so inflamed with love for men and for thee in particular, that being unable to contain within itself the flames of its charity, it is compelled to spread them by thy means." Such was the divine command, but how was a poor, obscure nun in a strictly enclosed Convent to go forth and propagate the devotion? The very nuns themselves were opposed to the devotion when first made known to them, and spoke against it as a novelty! What she personally could not do herself, was achieved by the Venerable Claude de la Colombière, the Superior of the Jesuits at Paray. This holy priest acted as Confessor to the Nuns 1673-75, and to him Sister Margaret confided the account of the wonderful spiritual favours she had received and the mandate to make the devotion known. Fr. Colombière behaved with traditional ecclesiastical circumspection. He let the matter take its course, and meantime tried his penitent in various ways to test her sincerity, but ultimately convinced

<sup>1</sup> John Bernard Dalgairns: *The Devotion to the Heart of Jesus*, 3rd edition, p. 74.

that the "finger of God was there," became henceforth the great champion of the devotion that was to animate the faithful throughout the world. He preached it in the Chapel-Royal, London, after going there in 1675 as Chaplain to the Duchess of York (later Queen Mary of Modena), and he spread a knowledge of it among the Catholics of England. The good Father was imprisoned during the Titus Oates Plot (1678), but after his return to Paray, the zealous priest continued till his holy death in February, 1683, to discourse on the devotion, and to explain everywhere its meaning and import.

The veneration of the Sacred Heart of course is not a new cult. It is a form of devotion to Our Lord's Sacred Humanity remounting back to the first ages of the Church.<sup>1</sup> The Heart of Our Saviour as the symbol of His love for us, is adored "not as mere flesh, but as intimately united to the Divinity," to quote the well-known passage in the Bull of Pius VI *Auctorem Fidei* (28 Aug. 1794), vindicating the practice against the Jensenists. The powerful example and preaching of Fr. Colombière and the gradual comprehension of the true meaning of devotion to the Sacred Heart, soon made converts in the Convent of Paray. When Mère Mary Melin succeeded Mère Greyfié as Superioress, she appointed Sœur Margaret Mary her Assistant, and from this time all misunderstanding and opposition seemed to have ceased. The new Superioress, though the funds of the house were far from flourishing, built a Chapel in honour of the Sacred Heart, and its ceremonious opening on 7th September, 1688, helped to make the devotion known still more. In fact, by this time, the cult had wrought a great improvement in the Convent. Fervour had taken the place of tepidity, and a spirit of ardent charity that of suspicion and censoriousness. This happy change preceded Sister Margaret Mary's death by a few years, but her own end was marked by those interior trials which so often accompany the passing of Holy Souls. On the 8th of October, 1690, she was compelled to go to bed, and though her medical attendant, Dr Billet, did not see anything in her case to cause undue alarm, yet she felt that death was actually near, and asked for, and received, holy Viaticum. During these days of her illness, she was much disturbed by the terrors of the Divine Judgment, but after receiving Communion, the fears in question passed away, or rather were succeeded by a holy serenity and confidence in God which remained with her till the end. The wonderful Nun of Paray-le-Monial died between seven and eight o'clock on the evening of 17th October, 1690, just after repeating the holy name of Jesus. A kind of halo shone round her features while those in the room, and the crowds in the street exclaimed: "the Saint is dead! The Saint of the Holy Maries is dead!" Her sanctity and indeed her whole life had been

<sup>1</sup> Tanqueray: *Theologia Dogmatica*, vol. ii., p. 797, 20th edition, 1926.

wonderful, and the miracles attributed to her intercession read like the marvel of some thaumaturge of the primitive ages! Yet the process of her Canonization despite all this, was slow. She was not declared Venerable till March, 1824 (Leo XII), nor Beatified till 18th September, 1864 (Pius IX). Her Canonization on 13th May, 1920, was one of the last official Acts of Benedict XV. The remains of the Saint repose in the splendid sepulchre of the Convent Chapel of Paray, and are the object of veneration to great numbers of devout pilgrims annually. For the rest, it may be said, that the devotion to Our Lord's Sacred Heart which St Margaret Mary did so much to establish, did not win its way without very considerable opposition from the Jansenists, lax and badly informed Catholics, and sceptics of the eighteenth Century. The devout faithful were even nicknamed "Cordicolæ" or "Heart-worshippers!" It was against this misconception and its supporters that the Bull, *Auctorem Fidei*, referred to, was directed. The learned treatise of Père J. de Gallifet *De Cultu Cordis Jesu* (1726)—the Pastorals of such Bishops as Francis Joseph of Boulogne, 1765—the public consecration of Marseilles to the Sacred Heart during the ravages of the great Plague (1720)—all marked the onward advance of this consoling form of piety in the country of its rise in these later times. The Feast permitted by Clement XIII to several Churches in 1765, is now spread over the whole world, while one of the last official acts of the ill-fated Louis XVI, during the incipient throes of the Revolution, was to sign the decree dedicating his unhappy country to the Heart, so compassionate for the woes that afflict mankind. Finally, in June, 1899, Leo XIII consecrated the human race to the Sacred Heart, an event which the illustrious Pope described as the "Great Act" of his pontificate.

OCTOBER 17 AND 23

## THE BLESSED URSULINE MARTYRS OF VALENCIENNES

(1794)

WHEN the great Revolution broke out in 1789, the Ursuline Nuns of Valenciennes were no doubt, like most other religious orders in France, looking forward to a certain amount of difficulty, but not to anything like the tragic development that so soon occurred. Their Convent had been established in the city since 1654, where their excellent school, advanced scholastic methods, and never failing charity to the poor, made them deservedly popular with all classes. But the progress of irreligion kept

pace with the other violent political changes. The Convent was suppressed, and the nuns left for Mons, Belgium, where they continued their good work in the house of their Institute in that town. During the temporary occupation of Valenciennes by the Austrians, the exiled Ursulines were recalled by the towns-people, and for some time resumed their old work of teaching. But after the expulsion of the Austrians, the Jacobins again took possession of the place, and among the first objects of their vengeance was the Ursuline Community charged with the "crime" of re-opening the Convent contrary to law! Though the fall of Robespierre in the previous July, had ended the reign of terror in Paris, the atrocities of the red revolutionaries still went on in some of the provinces, and Valenciennes was now to experience some of the last of these outrages. The guillotine was set up in the "Place du Grand Marché," and a Commission presided over by Lacoste, proceeded to supply it with victims. The Ursuline Nuns who had been cast into the public prison were haled before the tribunal, the first batch of five being arraigned on 17th October. "We returned here," they bravely replied in answer to one of the republican judges, "to teach the holy Catholic religion!" They were at once condemned to death. As they went to the scaffold, Mother Dejardin said rather reprovingly to the sorrowing Superioress, who was still awaiting her trial with the rest of the Nuns: "Mother, you always taught us to be brave, and now that we are about to be crowned, you weep over us!" On the 23rd, October, the Superioress, Mother Clotilde, and the six remaining Sisters shared the same glorious fate. "We do not die for the Republic," said Mère Clotilde, "but for the Faith, and for the Catholic Apostolic and Roman Religion that we taught; our Institute being founded for that purpose." These heroic Nuns were Beatified by Benedict XV, 13th June, 1920.

[*Almanach Catholique Français* 1921. (Paris: Bloud et Gay).  
*Newly Beatified Saints of* 1920. (Dublin: *Irish Messenger*,  
 1921.).]

#### OCTOBER 21

### ST URSULA AND HER COMPANIONS, VIRGINS AND MARTYRS

(? -Date of deaths very uncertain. Accounts varying from 238 to 451)

[For Life of this Saint, see Butler's *Lives of the Fathers, Martyrs and Other Saints*, Original Edition, 1756-1759.]

OCTOBER 30

RODRIGUEZ, S.J., ST ALPHONSUS  
(1531-1617)

ALPHONSUS RODRIGUEZ, who for the greater part of a century instructed and edified so many persons, was not a priest, or eminent theologian, but a simple lay-brother of the Society of Jesus. Born at Segovia, Spain, of devout parents of the commercial class, Diego and Maria Rodriguez, on 25th July, 1531, he early evinced a remarkable devotion to Our Lady. As a little child, he loved to kiss her pictures and images, yet it is said that he was twelve years of age before he was instructed in the devotion to which he was always so attached, *i.e.*, that of the holy rosary. For a short time he studied at the Universities of Alcala and Valencia, but the death of his father made it necessary for him to return home to carry on the family business. But though in the world, he was not of it. He heard Mass daily, recited the rosary with great fervour, and joined in all the services of the Church as far as his secular affairs permitted. He married, but lost both wife and a daughter by death not many years later. He and a little son then went to live with his mother and sister, both for economy sake and mutual consolation. Alphonsus dedicated his last surviving child to God, and he used daily to pray that the boy might be taken young rather than live to commit sin. This constant prayer was heard, and the little boy died shortly after reaching his fourth birthday.

Alphonsus had long contemplated retiring from the world and now that the last earthly tie was gone, he applied to be admitted into the Society of Jesus. As his studies had been early broken off, he was advised by Fr. Louis Santander to study Latin further so as to qualify himself for the course for the priesthood. Eventually through the medium of Fr. Anthony Cordeses, Provincial of Aragon, he was accepted as a lay-brother, "I think," said Fr. Cordeses, "he will be useful to us all by his example and prayers." He entered the Noviciate at Valencia, 31st July, 1571, and after six months was transferred to the newly-opened College of Montesion at Majorca, where he took the solemn vows, 5th April, 1585.

For nearly fifty years, Alphonsus filled the obscure, but really very important, position of hall-porter at the College with great exactness, offering up the almost innumerable irritations and vexations associated with that daily routine, as so many acts of mortification. As soon as the bell rang, the holy lay-brother went to answer it, with the words "I am ready, O Lord" on his lips. The time not taken up with attending at the door, was filled by meditation, the rosary and ejaculatory prayers. so that, as Fr. Michael Julian said of him: "he seemed rather to be an

angel than a man!" Though not learned as the result of study, he soon became filled with that infused knowledge, instances of which are so often seen in the lives of the Saints, and at the Sunday Conferences at the College on moral and speculative questions, the opinion of the holy lay-brother was looked forward to by theologians, canonists, and civil lawyers as that of an inspired oracle, almost! His advice was sought by numbers of persons both religious and lay, and among these by Fr. Peter Claver, the Apostle of the Negroes, who was a student at the College during a part of this time. St Alphonsus foretold that the young philosopher would one day go to the Indies—as America was then often termed—and there win many souls to God! In the midst of all this, the Saint was allowed by God to receive many internal and external trials. He suffered from long attacks of depression, and dryness. His mind was worried by lawless and discouraging thoughts, while to these were joined grave ill health, insomnia and other physical troubles. This was notably the case towards the end of his long life, and for months before his death, he was confined to his bed with a complication of painful maladies which baffled the medical skill of the day, and which could only be met by patience and resignation. He foretold the day of his death and having received the last rites with his wonted fervour, "El Santo," as he was already called by the people of the place, passed to his reward on 31st October, 1617.

Crowds of persons came to venerate the remains of one who had for years been looked up to as an example of extraordinary sanctity. His obsequies were attended by the Viceroy, the notables of the town and representatives of all the religious orders, and such was the popular demand for relics of the deceased, that two Dominican monks, we are told, were kept busy touching the coffin with the medals that were handed to them in bunches by the people! The body of the wonderful lay-brother rests in a vault of the Lady Chapel of the Cathedral of Majorca. On 1st January, 1610, the Viceroy, Don Pedro Zufort, by letter drew the attention of the Pope, Paul V to the heroic virtues of the deceased, who was declared Venerable eight years later. In 1633 the Venerable Alphonsus Rodriguez was named one of the patrons of the City of Majorca, but beatification did not take place till 12th June, 1825 (Leo XII). He was Canonized by Leo XIII, 6th September, 1887. Many miracles, cures of malignant and troublesome diseases chiefly, have been ascribed to the intercession of the Saint, who also left behind him several *MS.*, volumes of notes and reflections on various spiritual subjects, all remarkable for sound doctrine and intense devotion. Some of these literary remains have been published, *e.g.* *Spiritual Works of B. Alphonsus Rodriguez* (3 vols., Barcelona, 1885).

NOVEMBER 2

MARGARET OF LORRAINE, DUCHESS OF ALENÇON,  
THE BLESSED  
(1463-1521)

THE Blessed Margaret of Lorraine has a certain interest for English people, for she was the granddaughter of "Good King René" whose splendid poverty, for all his Kingdoms of Jerusalem and Sicily, has been celebrated in some of Shakespeare's best remembered lines.<sup>1</sup> The future Duchess of Alençon and Saintly Nun of the Poor Clares, was, therefore, the niece of that beautiful and high-spirited woman, Margaret of Anjou, who did all but fight sword in hand in the field to save the fading Red Rose and the tottering throne of her holy Consort, Henry VI. The little Princess of Lorraine lost her father at the age of eight, and two years later she was sent to be educated by her grandfather, a very wise choice, for "Good King René," if he had little regal power, was a famous scholar and no mean poet, while his writings on agriculture made him the "Arthur Young" of his day. The solitary and possibly, not too affluent palace of Aix, where the little girl spent two years with King René and Queen Joan, would no doubt, have oppressed most children, but not Margaret. She loved seclusion, and would often pass hours by herself in the park, day-dreaming like most reflective children, but also praying much amidst the green glades and quiet thickets as did dear St Joan of Arc half a century before. In 1481, old King René ended his sorrowful life, about a year before the decease of his grief-stricken daughter, the exiled Queen of England, then living in poverty and retirement at Dampierre.<sup>2</sup> The subject of this notice after this went back to her family in Lorraine, where death and reverses had also been busy during her absence, but where she was to find a kind friend and sympathetic counsellor in her sister-in-law, Philippa of Gueldres, whose influence over her proved to be of the happiest.

In May 1488, when twenty-five years of age, Margaret married at Paris, Duke René of Alençon, son of the valiant warrior, John second of the title, who had been the companion-in-arms of St Joan of Arc. Duke

<sup>1</sup> "Thy father bears the type of King of Naples,  
Of both the Sicils and Jerusalem;  
Yet not so wealthy as an English yeoman.  
Hath that poor monarch taught thee to insult?"

*Henry VI*, part iii., act i., scene iv.

<sup>2</sup> Queen Margaret of Anjou was buried at Angers, and until the time of the Revolution the Canons of the Cathedral used daily to chant part of the office of the dead around her tomb.



René was then forty-eight years of age, and a man whose prodigal habits might easily have brought disaster on himself and his subjects. Under the happy guidance of his devoted and most capable wife, things greatly flourished in the ducal Court of Alençon. The finances were put in order, scandals removed, churches and other public buildings destroyed or injured in the wars or by the ravages of time, restored, and peace and prosperity greatly promoted. After four short but very profitable years of married life, Duke René died a holy death (1st November, 1492), assured in his last moments that his excellent wife would continue to direct well, not only the little family of three children, but also the public affairs of the Duchy. He was not mistaken. The Duchess, despite some opposition from Charles VIII of France, retained the guardianship of her children, who were educated under her immediate supervision at the Castle of Mauves, not far from Mortagne. The children grew up admirably instructed in all that became their rank. Charles the son, greatly distinguished himself at the victory of Louis XII over the Venetians at Agnadel (1509), and the same year, he married Margaret of Angoulême, sister of the future Francis I of France. Anne, the second daughter, married the Marquis of Montferrat, from which stock sprang later the famous St Aloysius Gonzaga. Meanwhile, the Duchess of Alençon had likewise proved herself a wise and just ruler of her late husband's territories. She traversed the Duchy frequently, redressing grievances and seeing personally to the administration of justice. The taxes were lightened, works of utility promoted, and the care of the orphan, the widow and the destitute well attended to! Moreover, the nobility and gentry were encouraged to interest themselves in the welfare of their poorer neighbours. To this wise policy was due much of that social happiness which marked the Duchy of Alençon for so many years.

As soon as her son came of age and was capable of managing the affairs of his dominions, the Duchess felt that she could put into execution a project she had long in mind *i.e.* that of retiring into semi-conventual seclusion at the Castle of Essai near Sées. After the death of her husband, her life had been marked by great religious fervour, and a total renunciation of "the world," as far as such a thing was possible for one in her exalted station. Her first Confessor as Duchess of Alençon, was St Francis of Paula, under whom she advanced far in that state of holiness which in our time has caused her to be raised to the altars of the Church. She now, about 1514, began to practise such austerities that both the bishop of the diocese and her director had to bid her mitigate the severities of the daily mortifications, which injunction she fulfilled at once, knowing as do all good Catholics, that obedience is better than sacrifice.

In 1515, the Duchess went to live near the Poor Clare Convent at

Mortagne, where she devoted much time to attending the indigent and the sick, performing daily the most menial and even repulsive services for these "poor brethren of Jesus Christ!" In August, 1519, she entered the Convent of the Poor Clares which she had founded at Argentan and was professed there, 11th October, 1520. Henceforth she carried out all the duties of the house in common with the humblest sisters. Her health, however, which for several years had been declining, soon became rapidly worse, and on 2nd November, 1521, the short professed life of this truly noble religious was ended by a holy death. One of her last acts of humility was to decline the Superiorship of the Convent, saying that she wished to continue living on as one of the subordinate members of the Community. The body of this holy Foundress and public spirited woman was interred in the vaults of the Convent of Argentan, but after being the object of great local veneration for more than two and a half centuries, it was thrown by a Jacobin mob into a common grave at the time of the Revolution. Popular piety, however, has never ceased to honour the holy Duchess of Alençon who was declared Blessed by Benedict XV, 20th March, 1921, an act which thus gave official sanction to the cultus rendered from time immemorial to one of the most remarkable women of France under the Valois dynasty.

[*Almanach Catholique Française pour 1923.* (Paris: Bloud et Gay.).]

#### NOVEMBER 3

ST HUBERT, BISHOP OF LIÈGE, C.

(?–727?)

[For Life of this Saint, see Butler's *Lives of the Fathers, Martyrs and other Saints*, Original Edition, 1756–1759.]

#### NOVEMBER 7

PERBOYRE, THE BLESSED JEAN GABRIEL,  
MARTYR IN CHINA

(1802–1840)

THE foundation of the College of Foreign Missions, Paris, in 1663, marked an era in the history of the heroic efforts which ever since the days of St Francis Xavier had been made to win the nations of the Far East to the faith of Christ. The unhappy and, as it now appears, almost needless

Dominican and Jesuit disputes about the "Chinese Customs," *i.e.* the expediency of paying religious veneration to Confucius and departed ancestors, and terming God "The Lord of Heaven," did much to destroy the appreciable amount of good already effected, but notwithstanding these and other sets-back, Catholicism made distinct progress in China especially during the latter part of the eighteenth Century, when the friendly Emperor, Keen Lung, showed much favour to the missionaries. But under his successor, Kea-King (1795-1820), the aspect changed. A violent persecution arose, and though Europe, owing to the Napoleonic conflagration, was too distracted to notice it, the war against Christianity in China claimed its martyr victims by the thousand! Rumours of the trials of the faithful in the Celestial Empire, however, became more incisive, after 1815, and they aroused great enthusiasm among many holy souls.

One of the many fired by the stories of the constancy of the martyrs, was Jean Gabriel Perboyre, the son of pious parents, Pierre and Marie Perboyre, who was born at Puech, Cahors, France, 6th January, 1802. After some edifying years at the elementary school of his native place, he entered the little Seminary of Montauban and having completed the usual course there, he proceeded in December, 1818, to the Vincentian College at Montauban as a student for the foreign missions. He took the four Vows, 28th December, 1820, and was ordained priest, 23rd September, 1825, by Mgr. Louis Guillaume Dubourg, then bishop of New Orleans, who the following year, was translated to Montauban. During his Seminary course, Père Perboyre had greatly distinguished himself in dogmatic theology, and though it was his ardent wish to go at once to China, he found himself selected to teach divinity at the Seminary of Saint Flour. While there, he was regarded as a model of holiness, and his lectures derived a double force from the fact that he imbued his students with the same saintly enthusaism as filled his own soul. They felt that in very truth, they were equipping themselves for the glorious work of the mission field, and that every bit of information they acquired increased their efficiency and insured ultimate success. So greatly did he impress all around him, that in 1832, he was chosen for the responsible post of Sub-director of the House in Paris. Here he remained till 1835, and then at last received permission to go to the East. He arrived at Macao, 29th August, the same year. The progress he made in colloquial Chinese must have been very rapid, for by December, he had been appointed to the important mission of Ho-Nan. The Lazarists or Vincentians to which Congregation Père Perboyre belonged, had succeeded the Jesuit Fathers at Peking in 1783,<sup>1</sup> and a notable feature of their apostolate has been to

<sup>1</sup> By a decree of Propaganda, 7th December, 1783, approved by Louis XVI at Versailles, 8th January, 1784.

rescue deserted children and bring them up in the Catholic faith. Both at Ho-Nan and afterwards at Hou Pi, Fr. Perboyre laboured with the zeal that had always marked his efforts from the days of his early childhood. He formed large Catechism classes, assembling the children by the ringing of a bell, and diversifying his religious instructions by amusing stories and narratives. It is not easy to trace the origin of the great persecution that arose in 1839. It may have been fomented to a certain extent by the domineering manner in which the European traders, and conspicuously among them, the East India Company, forced on the native population the deadly opium drug which the Imperial Government was anxious to suppress, but whatever was the cause, the trouble soon became very acute. Père Perboyre was proscribed, though for a time, the good Father and his party eluded capture, but the pursuit soon became very hot. "We were tracked as beasts of the chase," said Fr. Joseph Clausette, Pro Vicar-General of the Province of Hu-Quang, who with great difficulty escaped. "They pursued us poor missionaries as robbers, though we have no other feelings towards these gentiles than that of charity, no other wish than to open to them the gate of Heaven." Fr. Perboyre was at length overtaken in a valley. "Thirty piastres to anyone who will show me the missionary!" cried the officer in command of the soldiers, to the group of fugitives, and it was a Christian neophyte who, to save his own life, betrayed the priest. For several weeks, Fr. Perboyre was carried, or rather dragged about from place to place as an exhibit to the populace. He was repeatedly tortured to make him reveal the hiding place of Bishop Rameaux, Vicar-Apostolic of Kiang-Si. A Chinese priest who in disguise visited the captive, described him as a mass of wounds, many of his bones bare—a sight most dreadful to behold! Finally, having refused to trample on the crucifix and so purchase his life by apostasy, Fr. Perboyre was taken to Ou-Tchang-Fou, and there after further tortures, strangled to death on a cross-shaped gibbet. Three years later, the heroic missionary was declared Venerable by Gregory XVI (9th July, 1843). He was Beatified by Leo XIII 9th November, 1889.

[*Christian Missions, their Agents and their Results*, vol. i., by T. W. M. Marshall, Second edition (Longmans, Green & Co. 1863).]

NOVEMBER 14

## ST JOSAPHAT, BISHOP AND MARTYR

(1580 or 1584-1623)

Just as Molière's bourgeois gentleman spoke prose for some forty years without knowing it! so the Russian Church, or what is left of it, professes belief, it seems, in the papal Supremacy without being aware of the fact! The ancient liturgical books of the fallen ecclesiastical polity of the Czars, speak of such Popes of Rome as St Sylvester as "the divine head of the holy bishops." St Leo (II?) is styled "the successor on the highest throne of St Peter, the heir of the invincible rock and the successor in his kingdom." Pope Leo III is apostrophized as "the Chief Shepherd of the Church and the Representative of Jesus Christ." This being so, it is difficult to account for the long and almost complete separation from the centre of unity of a body almost daily repeating such religious sentiments, and one so replete with doctrine bearing on St Peter's name and office. Obstinate and wilful ignorance of Church history, confusion of ideas, and jealousy of their own independence, to mention but a few of the causes, have been the real reason of this unhappy division. At the Council of Florence, 1439, a great effort was made to heal the schism, and Isidore, Archbishop of Kiev, or Moscow, and a Cardinal-Legate for all Russia, so far succeeded, that he drew with him no fewer than nine suffragan bishops. Scarcely anything remained of the union, however, beyond the fact, and all that it implied. The reunion was solemnly proclaimed in the Church of the Kremlin, 1441, but the Czar, Vasili II, most of the Clergy and people were opposed, and Cardinal Isidore ended his days in exile at Rome (1463). Good ideas, however, may be obscured, but they never die. Though the official union of 1441 soon faded away, belief in the necessity of the oneness of Christ's Church, and of the primacy of St Peter's successors over it, survived. In 1595, the Metropolitan of Moscow, Michael Ragosa, and seven of his suffragans severed their connection with the Patriarch of Constantinople, and were received by Pope, Clement VIII, into communion with the Holy See. Hence, the formation of the Ruthenian Province for spiritually governing the Russian clergy and people in union with Rome. The liturgy used is the Greek translated into old Slavonic.

Among the considerable number of Uniat Russians towards the close of the sixteenth century, was a family at Volodymyr in Lithuania named Kuncewicz, the head of which held the honourable position of town-councillor. His son John—better known from his name in religion, as

Josaphat—was born in 1580 or 1584.<sup>1</sup> From the first, the future martyr gave signs of extraordinary piety and uncommon abilities. Though as a boy he did not care for games, he was always very cheerful, and so kind-hearted that everyone, as the saying goes, took to him. After he went to school and had made very rapid progress, he devoted himself to the study of the ancient Slavonic, which it is said, very few of the priests even at that time understood. He not only read the *breviary* daily in that language, but soon got to know it by heart! Though like Chaucer's Clerk of Oxenford, "gladly would he learn and gladly teach," he found himself when very young, compelled, owing to the *res augustæ domi*, to take to trade at Vilna. He applied himself so diligently to what must have been to a scholarly mind, a very uncongenial occupation, that his master, Popovyc, not only became his fast friend, but offered him his daughter in marriage. But the student-apprentice already felt the call of the cloister, and a few years later he entered the Basilian Monastery in the town. Vilna, Poland, at that time was undergoing a great Catholic development. The decrees and other regulations of the Council of Trent—the newly founded Colleges and Schools under the Jesuits—and a general higher appreciation of spiritual life and duties—were all making for reform. The Bishop, Benedict Woina (1600–15), was a zealous and active prelate, now chiefly remembered for his part in the canonization of St Casimir. As a monk of St Basil, Brother Johannes or Josaphat, as he now was, became like St Alphonsus Rodriguez at the same period, a sort of oracle of holy instruction and wise advice. People flocked to consult him, though he was not then a priest, and his advice invariably carried with it the correct solution of doubt and difficulty. At the Jesuit Seminary of the town which had been founded by Prince George Radziwill, Cardinal-bishop of Cracow, there was at this time a learned divine, Fr. Fabricius, under whom Brother Josaphat studied for the priesthood to which he was ordained in 1609. Between that time and 1617, the good Father filled the office of Superior at several houses of his order. He was already regarded as a "living Saint" and miracles were said to testify to his sanctity, as that of the alleged instance of the apparition of the Infant Jesus to him during holy Mass. All this time, the Uniat body had to withstand the attacks of schismatics and protestants, and in this species of spiritual warfare, Abbot Josaphat as he now was, came to be regarded as a pillar of the truth, his unrivalled knowledge of the ancient Slavonic liturgy and the Eastern Fathers, enabling him to dispose of the specious arguments of

<sup>1</sup> It has been stated by some authors that St Josaphat was a Convert from the Russian schismatics, but this is not correct. His parents were Uniates. The Breviary lesson for the Saint's Feast (November 14th) says of his origin: "nobilibus et Catholicis parentibus Valdimiriæ in Volhinia natus."

such opponents as Meletius Smotrycky and others. In 1617, he was promoted to the See of Vitebsk, as Coadjutor to the Archbishop of Polotsk, whom he succeeded the following year. As a Superior of the Basilian Order, the new Archbishop had had a wide experience in promoting the many excellent Schools and Convents of the Fathers and Nuns. He now devoted himself to the important work of fostering, not only the instruction of the people, but of the parochial clergy, with many of the latter of whom it had long unfortunately been a case of "the clerk his creed he could scarcely read!" Like Archbishop Hamilton, and the rest of the Scots bishops at the Synod of Edinburgh, 1552, he drew up and published a dogmatic Catechism based on that of Trent, and all candidates for parishes and curacies had to be examined in it before being appointed. While wielding the pen, he used the weapon of the pulpit with almost equal effect. His discourses were largely attended, and great numbers embraced the Catholic faith, the truth of which they now heard stated for the first time. Among his illustrious converts are reckoned first, the Patriarch of Moscow, Ignatius, who ridding his mind of the traditional attitude of the Russian higher clergy not to study the question impartially, went into the matter under the Saint's guidance and found the truth. The other was Prince Emmanuel, a member of the imperial family of the Palæologi. If sound arguments and burning zeal could have effected a reunion, the holy Archbishop would have achieved it, but the jealousy of the erastian Imperial Government, and the wilful misrepresentations of many of the Russian clergy, who refused to be instructed, as before observed, proved insuperable obstacles. There can be no doubt also that the fact of having to submit to the severe disciplinary decrees of Trent, was highly distasteful to a body which nearly all contemporary accounts describe as paralysed with sloth and apathy, and sunk in vice and sensuality! Besides his labours for reunion, St Josaphat toiled unremittingly for the faithful of his province. He spent hours daily in the Confessional, undertook long visitation and missionary journeys, everywhere urging clergy and people to live as became priests and members respectively of Christ's Mystical Body. He gave most of his personal revenues to works of charity or piety, wore a hair-shirt, fasted almost daily, and did so much other mortification, that his Confessor had to restrain him! Like St Thomas of Canterbury, the zeal of the Saintly Archbishop was the cause of his death. The constant efforts of the Saint to expose the historical and doctrinal falsifications and other nefarious practices of the schismatics, and his severe rebuke of the vicious living that was the other immense obstacle to reunion, goaded the so-called Orthodox party to fury. Their leader was a learned grammarian, the above-named Meletius Smotrycky.<sup>1</sup> For some time threats of violence had been

<sup>1</sup> Sometimes spelt Smotriski.

made against the Archbishop, but he disregarded them, but on 12th November, 1623, while his Grace was staying at Vitebsk for the visitation, a savage mob—amongst which was the before-mentioned Meletius Smotrycky, if he were not, indeed, the actual leader—burst into the episcopal palace, attacking the officials and calling for the Archbishop. With almost the same words, and with the whole of the calm courage of St Thomas of Canterbury, the undaunted prelate replied: “My children, why are you injuring my people? If you have anything against me, here I am!” Several musket shots and a stroke from a halberd consummated the martyrdom of this glory of Ruthenian Catholicism. His body though cast into the river, was recovered six days later and very soon the blood of the martyr became in truth the seed of the local Church. Most of the schismatics submitted to the Faith, and among them not very long afterwards the arch-conspirator, Smotrycky himself, who spent his last years in bewailing his former obstinacy and the terrible crime to which it had given rise. The Martyr-Archbishop, to whose intercession many and remarkable miracles were attributed, was Beatified by Urban VIII in 1643. His body was that year found to be incorrupt. The Canonization took place at St Peter’s, 29th June, 1867 (Pius IX), on the same day as that of St Paul of the Cross (*q.v.*), and the Feast (14th November) has since been extended by Leo XIII to the whole Church.

#### NOVEMBER 14

### FARINGDON (OR COOK), THE BLESSED HUGH, ABBOT OF READING, MARTYR (?–1539)

It is surmised that Hugh Cook, a native of Faringdon, Berks, was a man of obscure origin, but that he was also one of more than average ability is proved by the fact that he was Sub-Chamberlain of the ancient Benedictine Abbey, Reading, which Henry I had founded, and enriched with the relic of the hand of St James the Greater. He was elected as successor to Abbot Thomas Worcester, 1520. Henry VIII who was later to bring about his martyrdom, affected great regard for him at this time, calling him “My Abbot!” and sending him New Year’s Gifts. In return, Abbot Faringdon gave the King presents of Kennet trout—caught, anglers will grieve to hear, not with the fly, but in nets!—and hunting knives, these latter no doubt, very useful in Windsor Forest and the other far expanding woods, then covering the district. In 1530 the Abbot signed with the rest of the Lords Spiritual and temporal, the petition to the Pope (Clement VII) praying his Holiness to oblige Henry VIII by divorcing Queen Catherine! Needless to add, most of the signatures



were only obtained through great pressure. Faringdon also supplied "his Grace" with a list of books likely to help both the regal Polemic and the royal theologians in making out a case for the dissolution of the marriage. All this certainly does not prepare us for Faringdon's courage in the end. He was arrested sometime in 1539, either for sending money, three years before, to the Leaders of the Pilgrimage of Grace, or for saying that the "King's Highness cannot be Supreme Head of the Church of England." His condemnation appears to have been in London, but he was sent back to Reading for execution. At his Abbey gate, where he suffered the usual awful penalties of treason, 14th November, 1539, he boldly upheld the Authority of the Holy See in Spirituals, which he declared to be the common faith of those "who had the best right to define the true teaching of the English Church." Though probably not "a scholarly Benedictine" of the traditional type, Abbot Faringdon was a patron of learning, especially as regards the young, as Leonard Cox, master of Reading Grammar School, shows in a book of rhetoric which he dedicated to his Lordship in 1524. Abbot Cook or Faringdon, was Beatified by Leo XIII, 29th December, 1886.

[Much curious information, concerning the Martyr and the dissolution of Reading, Abbey is to be found in *The History and Antiquities of Reading*, by Charles Coates (1746?-1813). See also Cardinal Gasquet: *Henry VIII and the English Monasteries*.]

#### NOVEMBER 26

#### ST LEONARD OF PORT MAURICE, O.S.F.

(1676-1751)

WHEN the cause of the beatification of the Venerable Leonard of Port Maurice was going forward in 1796, the Postulator, the Cardinal Duke of York, must have had many and diverse memories and reflections! For sixty years before, the great Franciscan Preacher and Confessor had been the director of the titular Henry IX's own mother, Clementina Sobieski, that "Queen of Hearts" whom her laborious, honourable, but somewhat gloomy Consort, King James III and VIII found so very trying. Not only was Queen Clementina disillusioned and nervy, but she took sides in the tangled politics of the exiled Court, and cast suspicions on all kinds of people, including the faithful Hay, Lord Inverness! Above all, and quite rightly, did she resent the half Catholic half Protestant education which was responsible, so largely for the undoing of her son, Prince Charles Edward.

It is admitted, however, that the disastrous family jar ended, and husband and wife came to be on the best of terms again, not long after the

once gay and adventurous, but later very temperamental, Princess took seriously to religion. So, no doubt, we must to a great extent, attribute the happy change to the influence of that Blessed Father, Leonard of Port Maurice, her Confessor, who in the fullness of time was to be raised to the altars of the Church. Born at Porto Maurizio, a small coast town near Genoa, 20th December, 1676, the son of Dominic Casanova and his wife Anna Maria Berga, the future light of the Franciscan Order received through the assistance of his uncle Agostino Casanova, his higher education at the Roman College, where his piety, and amiable disposition made the students and Jesuit professors believe that another St Aloysius Gonzaga had come among them! As an associate of the Little Oratory of Caravita, he had to assist at the missions, discourses and other pious efforts of the Fathers for the instruction of the people, and it was this apostolic work that fired Leonard with the holy ambition of devoting himself body and soul to his neighbours' spiritual good. With this end in view, he entered, after consulting Fr. Grifonelli, his Confessor, the Reformed branch of the Friars-Minor at Ponticelli, where on 2nd October, 1697, he received the habit, and where, also, he edified the whole Community as he had that of the Roman College, by his extraordinary devotion and humility. At the house of studies of the "Reformella" on the Palatine, he applied himself with great ardour to the works of St Bonaventure, regarding that bright light of the Seraphic Order as the chief armoury under God's grace whence he was to draw the spiritual weapons for the heavenly warfare for Souls. After his ordination he was kept on as Professor of Philosophy, this in itself, no doubt, a severe trial to an ardent soul who was already longing to be instructing the ignorant and counselling the doubtful abroad, even as far off as the Chinese mission field! Another obstacle at the outset, was a dangerous gastric hæmorrhage which made him practically an invalid for four years (1704-8). This period of delay and suffering was not passed without much profit. Further study and much prayer added knowledge and increased fervour, and finally in the last-named year, Fr. Leonard having been assured by Cardinal Colleredo that neither China nor any non-Catholic lands were to be his mission field, but on the contrary, the towns and villages of his native Italy, he began preaching mission sermons in the Church of his birth-place, Port Maurice.

There was near Florence, a lonely house called Monte Alle Croce, where Fr. Leonard and the rest of the Fathers used to retire sometimes for prayer and recollection, after the conclusion of the missions. The course of retreat on these occasions was based upon the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius. The house belonged to the devout Cosmo III, Duke of Florence, who very munificently made over the place to the Friars. Fr. Leonard

established a pious Community there, the members of which were of great assistance to him in the missions and retreats which he now gave in Florence and many other parts of Tuscany. In all his sermons, the Saint laid stress on two great devotions, a tender love of Our Lord, especially through His Sacred Passion, and a constant trust in the holy Mother of God.

Like St Paul of the Cross later, and the Blessed Sebastian Valfrè before him, he strove to increase individual fervour by a more frequent reception of the Sacraments, chiefly with a view of counteracting the "coldness" and doubting tendencies which, owing to Jansenism and the sceptical atmosphere which that gloomy heresy so greatly fostered, were already producing very unhappy results, notably in the cities and large towns of the north of Italy. The courses he preached at this time, chiefly in the towns and villages of the dioceses of Massa, Arezzo and Volterra resulted in the conversion of very many to a better life. In 1715, he was chosen Superior of the Convent of St Francis at Florence, and the rules which he drew up for the guidance of the religious there, were expressly commended by Clement XI. But missions were his true vocation, and these were continued at Pisa, Leghorn, Lucca, etc., so that in a comparatively few years all Tuscany had been evangelized by the Saint's labours. In September 1730, Cardinal Barberini summoned him to Rome. He began his task there by instructing the poor in the Hospital of St Galla, and then gave missions in the Churches of St Giovanni dei Fiorentini; St Carlo in Corso; St Pietro in Vincoli, and St Maria in Trastevere. Large congregations attended, and many who had lived for this world only, turned to God in sincerity and truth.

He then returned to Tuscany, where the Grand Duke and people awaited his arrival with impatience. He re-opened the spiritual exercises at Camajore, preaching chiefly as usual on his favourite devotion, the Way of the Cross, which he did so much to popularize not only in Italy, but throughout Europe. In February 1735, he was back in Rome and the Romagna, where at the request of Cardinal Corradini he gave missions in the diocese of Frascati. It was about this time too, that he became Confessor to the titular Stuart Queen, Maria Clementina, bringing to her, as to others, much peace of soul.<sup>1</sup>

The rules drawn up by the Saint for the giving of missions and retreats by the Fathers under his rule, were always strictly observed by himself. They are no less than 61 in number, but the chief points relate to such matters as great devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, the Holy Ghost, and Our Lady; frequent fasting, and careful daily meditation as the chief

<sup>1</sup> The last Stuarts had a great predilection for the Franciscans from the time of James II onward. Prince Charles Edward Stuart was attended on his death-bed, January, 1788, by Fathers James and Francis M'Cormick, O.S.F., of the Irish Franciscan Province.

means of drawing down the blessing of God on this important labour for Souls. He preached many courses to soldiers, sailors, labouring people and prisoners, his striking appearance, searching look and voice—all recalling the demeanour of St Vincent Ferrer—making a great impression, but all of course secondary to that produced by his renowned holiness and mortification of life. With rare exceptions, the Saint made all his missionary journeys barefoot, walking very often miles through ice and snow to the place of his destination.

During the summer of 1744, St Leonard preached throughout Corsica, the island being then rent by fierce feuds and vendettas, so that very often he had literally to say to the people who thronged to hear him: “In the *Lord's* name, I charge you drop your swords and daggers!” At Casinga the crowd waited in the Church all night to go to Confession, and at Mariana numbers of persons hitherto enemies, were publicly reconciled. At Castel d’Acqua, the words of the Saint prevented a pitch-battle between two local factions already drawn up for the fray! One of the last of the great missions given by this wonderful apostle in an age famous before all others for laxity and indifference, was at Gallicano near Bologna, where at the concluding sermon, it was estimated that some thirty thousand were present! Though then very ill, St Leonard returned to Rome in order to comply with the wishes of Benedict XIV to aid in the preaching of the Jubilee. When he arrived in the Eternal City, 26th November, 1751, he was so weak that he had to be carried from the carriage to the Infirmary of the Franciscan Monastery of St Bonaventure. He immediately received the holy Viaticum, and a day or so later, the Extreme Unction. The great zealator of Souls passed quietly away, early in the morning of 26th November, 1751, the news of his death bringing crowds to the Convent to venerate the remains of one already long openly spoken of as “Il Santol” “Our loss on earth is very great,” said Benedict XIV on being informed of the decease, “but we have gained an advocate in Heaven.” A long list of cures is recorded of various painful and dangerous diseases, believed to have been wrought through the intercession of this true Apostle, the fame of whose sanctity continued to grow especially in Italy, all during the eighteenth Century. Declared Blessed by Pius VI, 19th June, 1796, he was Canonized by Pius IX, 29th June, 1867. Besides his living instructions, St Leonard left behind him thirteen volumes of ascetical writings, many of the devotions of which—as *The Way of the Cross Simplified and Explained*—have passed into the religious daily life of the Catholic world.

[*Life of the Blessed Leonard of Port Maurice*, by Fr. Giuseppe Maria. Translation published by Richardson & Son, London, 1852.]

NOVEMBER 29

MAYNE OR MAINE, THE BLESSED CUTHBERT,  
 PROTOMARTYR OF DOUAY COLLEGE  
 (1548-1577)

CUTHBERT MAYNE, the son of John Mayne, Esq., of Youlston near Barnstaple, the representative of a very old Devonshire family, was, it is said, about nineteen years of age when he received the Anglican diaconate, and for a reason which ere long became notorious in the then recently established State Church, *i.e.* to obtain a rich benefice. Rich benefices have in the past frequently allured the ecclesiastically ambitious, both in this country and elsewhere, but the excuse of Mr Mayne must be that it was his uncle "a schismatic rector," who urged him to this step, and also, that at this time, he had himself no very clear ideas about "Orders" or even religion! The past forty years of almost constant change in doctrine in this country must have bewildered a good many more besides Mr Mayne! The accession of Elizabeth, as is well known, was followed by a great dearth of ministers, so that all kinds of unsuitable persons had to be "admitted to orders," even cobblers, tinkers, bag-pipers, and serving men out of place as Heylin informs us in his *History of the Reformation*. The Synod of London under Archbishop Matthew Parker, April, 1571, sought to remedy this by providing for the examination of all preachers, and that none were to be henceforth ordained who were not "well versed in Latin or divinity," and furthermore that the ministers actually licensed were to account periodically, as to their studies in Scripture.<sup>1</sup> The year before this, Mr Mayne had taken his M.A. at St John's College, Oxford, where his sweet disposition made him much beloved. The College, a very recent one (1555) was a great stronghold of Catholicity, and the young Cornish graduate must have learnt much concerning the ancient faith during the time he spent within its walls.

Edmund Campion, the future martyr, was likewise a graduate of the College, and the Public Orator of the University. He became very friendly with Mayne, but left nearly a year before the latter proceeded M.A.<sup>2</sup> Knowing his friend's "Romeward tendency," Campion did not lose sight of him. A correspondence was kept up and it was the fact of one of these letters falling into the hands of the Bishop of London, that precipitated matters. Mayne, who was in Cornwall at the time hearing that a process was out for his arrest, took ship for the Continent, and was admitted to Douay College, 1573. The College which had only been opened five years

<sup>1</sup> Rev. Edward H. Landon: *A Manual of Councils*. (F. & J. Rivington, London, 1846.)

<sup>2</sup> Campion left Oxford, August, 1569. Mayne graduated M.A., 8th April, 1570.

before, by the Rev. W. Allen, Dr Vendeville and some other coadjutors, was at that time chiefly regarded as a sort of preparatory divinity school for the English College, Rome.

In the sequel, it was to become the more famous of the two institutions, and everything in fact, from the first seemed to favour its growth. It was not too far from England. It was a constituent College of the newly erected University of Douay, and it had a moderate but increasing income derived from Gregory XIII's grant, and subsidies from the Abbeyes of St Vaast (Arras), Auchin and Marchiennes. The place was already well filled with students, most of them graduates of Oxford. Mr Mayne took his B.D., degree at Douay, 1576, and in April of the same year returned to Cornwall. That county owing to its remoteness, the prevalence of the Celtic dialect—which perished with Dolly Pentreath, 1777—and strange local customs, was then probably more unknown to the rest of England than many Continental countries are at the present day. For a little more than a year, Mr Mayne acted as chaplain to a Mr or Sir Francis Tregian, a Catholic gentleman of Volveden or Golden, about five miles from Truro.

The Squire was the maternal uncle of the Venerable Thomas Sherwood who suffered for the faith at Tyburn, 7th February, 1578. He married Mary, daughter of Charles, seventh Lord Stourton, and is reported to have quitted the Court of Queen Elizabeth to escape the "amorous advances" of the Tudor Theodora!<sup>1</sup> Though Mr Mayne passed as his patron's steward, rumours as to his real character soon got abroad, and when Dr William Bradbridge, Bishop of Exeter, was making his visitation of the district, largely to induce the Cornish gentry to conform, he persuaded Sir Richard Grenville the Sheriff—and the future hero of the "Revenge" in its immortal struggle against a whole Spanish squadron!—to search Golden House. The excuse for their intrusion was the arrest of a mythical fugitive called Bourne, who, it was said was "wanted" in London. Thomas Tonkin in his *History of Cornwall*, states that Mr Mayne was "found concealed under an old tower." The usual account, however, has it that the priest was seized in his own room, which was broken into, and upon the suspect being searched "for a coat of mail" not that, but an *Agnus Dei* was found upon him.

Among his papers was discovered what was described as a Bull, absolving the Queen's subjects, but which in fact was only a common printed notice of the extraordinary Jubilee Indulgences. When the trial of the accused opened at the Assizes, Launceston, June, 1577, great

<sup>1</sup> This is the account given by Francis Plunkett, O.S.B., in his *De Vita Francisci Tregon*, but perhaps it is only one of the many vague scandals "about Queen Elizabeth," against which the sprightly R. B. Sheridan warns his readers and audiences!

difficulty was experienced in proving the counts of the indictment, especially those alleging Mr Mayne's priesthood and his having said Mass at Golden. It was a trial "at Bar" before Mr Justice Jeffrey and Mr Justice Manhood. The latter as senior and presiding judge in his charge to the jury laid great stress on "strong presumptions" supplying the place of legal proof, and the priest was consequently convicted. The dissenting opinion of his "learned brother," Jeffrey, however so far carried weight, that the propriety of the verdict was submitted for the opinion of the judges at Serjeants' Inn.<sup>1</sup> Their Lordships also differed—a very strong presumption, indeed, of the untenableness of the jury's finding even from the point of view of the Crown, but the Privy Council determined that the priest should be executed *in terrorem*.

The opening of Douay College had of course, completely disconcerted the plans of Elizabeth and her councillors, who had hoped that the old religion would die out gradually, with the Marian priests, and the field be thus left free for the new State establishment. The prospect of missionary priests coming to the country filled the supporters of the Tudor Church with mingled alarm and rage, and hence from the first, the great animus displayed by the government against all connected not only with Douay but with every "Seminary beyond the Sea."

Mayne was, indeed, offered his life if he would accept the royal supremacy, but he replied: "The Queen never was, nor is, nor ever shall be the head of the Church of England." When the rope was cut for the quartering at Launceston, 29th November, 1577, the martyr fell from the high gallows, and so injured his head by striking it against one of the upright beams, that he was dead before the horrible ripping up etc. began. A hand of Cuthbert Mayne, who was beatified by Leo XIII, 29th December, 1886, is preserved by the Nuns of the Carmelite Convent, Lanherne.

For harbouring the priest, Francis Tregian was deprived of all his property, and imprisoned for twenty-eight years in various places, Windsor Castle, the Marshalsea, etc. He was at length released at the intercession of the King of Spain, and died at Lisbon, 25th September, 1608.

It was noted subsequently that several of those who had a share in the Martyr's death, came to sinister ends. Dr Bradbridge (or Brodebridge), Bishop of Exeter, died the following year greatly in debt to the Crown, and all his goods were seized by the rapacious Queen.<sup>2</sup> The hangman is

<sup>1</sup> Mr Justice Jeffrey was "the plodding and studious judge," who in October of this year (1577), became Chief Baron of the Exchequer. He died 1578. He is not to be confounded, of course, with "Judge Jeffreys," who became so notorious on the same (Western) Circuit, over a century later.

<sup>2</sup> The episcopal debts, amounting to about £1400, a very large sum in those days, seem to have been incurred chiefly through agricultural speculation.

said to have died raving mad a month after the execution of the proto-martyr of the English College, Douay.

[*Oliver's Collections* (Dolman, 1857), pp. 2; 355. Challoner's *Memoirs of Missionary Priests*, edited by the Rev. J. H. Pollen, S.J.]

#### DECEMBER I

### CAMPION, S.J., THE BLESSED EDMUND, MARTYR (1540-1581)

THE saying that Corporate bodies have "neither a body to be kicked nor a soul to be damned!" has become so much of a proverb, that the vast good effected by these maligned institutions seems to be very nearly forgotten. Among the many good deeds of a famous foundation of the kind, must be reckoned the scholarship at St John's College, Oxford, which the Grocers' Company in 1556 gave to young Edmund Campion, son of a London Bookseller—a brilliant boy with a "future," who had already won much academic glory for his school, Christ's Hospital, by winning all kinds of scholastic laurels in open competition with the other London Schools which then, we are told, formed a sort of junior university. Till the end of the eighteenth century brought Lamb and Coleridge on to the scene, no such meteoric "Blue Coat boy" was to grace Edward VI's memorable foundation. Campion as the "Captain" of the school, had in elegant Latin diction welcomed Queen Mary to the City (1553), as later he was to orate her sister, Queen Elizabeth at Oxford in a speech that might have come from Cicero! He was, indeed, a great rhetorician and when poor Amy Robsart, Leicester's supposed victim—whose ghost so long was said to haunt Cumnor Hall—was buried at St Mary's Oxford, Campion was the chosen eulogizer of the hapless heroine of *Kenilworth*. The Reformation brought in this fashion of posthumous and fulsome praise of the dead, and made it indeed difficult, as Charles Lamb, when a little boy, once said, to know where the *bad* people lie buried!

At Oxford, therefore, Campion fully justified the prophets. The Queen (Elizabeth) at her visit, 1566, felt the attraction of his graceful scholarship, and Cecil, too, was no less impressed by this "diamond of England." Both these potentates were to have much to do with the young Oxonian's after career! A sort of "Puseyite" anglicanism then reigned over St John's as at Lincoln College, for the leaders of the Reformation



were shrewd enough to combine the *festina lente* with the *fortiter in re!* and Campion was among the many who sought to make the best of both worlds, Catholic and Protestant. Edmund Cheney, the "high Church" Bishop of Gloucester, talked him into accepting deacons' orders (1569), and with it, of course, the oath of supremacy. Campion at this time was on the verge of "going over," though where he got his Catholicism, is not easy to see. Christ's Hospital where he had been schooled was then and till very recently, the traditional home of "low Church" Protestantism—as was to be expected of the creation of the young hot-gospeller King. Probably it was the surroundings of St John's among other things, that wrought the change, for atmospheres are often charged with other things than electricity!

In August, 1569, Campion "full of remorse of conscience and detestation of mind" for having taken the order in question, left Oxford for Dublin. No doubt he sought a professorship in the new University that such patriots as Sir James Stanyhurst, Speaker of the Irish House of Commons, were seeking to form out of the all but defunct academic foundation of Pope John XXI. But the brilliant young Oxford graduate offended "The Castle" by his by now undisguised papistry, and the "Irishry" by a pamphlet. Even a less sensitive race than the Milesian might not relish an essay which laid the cause of the prevailing wildness outside the Pale to a want of English culture! So with enemies all around him, "our good Edmund" made for Douay, where at last he was to find rest of soul. There he was "received," and at the University took his long sought for B.D. In the character of Campion there was always something of the soldier, and it is not surprising, therefore that by 1573, the momentous convert should have been enlisted in the Society of Jesus. It was Mercurianus, the fourth General of the Society, who enrolled this more than interesting recruit. At Brunn in Moravia, where Campion passed part of his novitiate, he is said to have had a vision of Our Lady, who told him of the tragic but glorious crown that awaited him in England. At Prague he was ordained priest by the Archbishop (1577), after showing yet again, the diversity of his talents by preaching sermons, and writing school dramas of no common kind.

In a private conversation which Clement VIII had many years later with Dr Richard Barret, the illustrious Aldobrandini pontiff sarcastically asked the Rector of the English College, Douay—who was said to be "complaisant" to the Society—if he really thought that the existence of the world depended on the Jesuits! In 1579-80 however, the last hope of saving England to the Church was undoubtedly regarded by many as resting on them. Negotiation, patience, the Rising of the North, all alike had failed, and England like Germany seemed to be hopelessly lost

to the Faith. The vast success of the Society on the Continent and especially in those very regions lately wrested, or all but wrested, from the Church, was the immediate object-lesson that no doubt, led to the sending of a Jesuit mission to England. When St Peter Canisius began what may be called "the Jesuit Mission" in Germany, not only had the greater part of the Empire become protestant, but even among the Catholic minority the traditional faith was out of fashion, and few people went to Mass!<sup>1</sup> The Magdeburg Centuriators and their show of ponderous learning dominated the Teutonic mind, as the Tudor efficiency, the new nationalism and the Cranmer school of "comprehensive" theology dominated that of England. The great triumph of the Jesuits in Germany, Bohemia and Poland, so elequently recorded by Macaulay, might well be repeated, so many shrewd observers thought, in a country like England, where the people so greatly admired thoroughness and were reputed to be fair minded. Moreover the Jesuits were then at the height almost of their enormous reputation. All the heresies and schisms evoked or revived by the Reformation, had been studied by them, and whole libraries of controversial literature had come from their active pens. Not only that, but they were largely responsible for that courtesy in controversy which did so much to civilize religious disputation, and bring "sweet reason" into doctrinal debate. Their experience, too, was on a par with their erudition and politeness, for, like Ulysses, the Society was skilled in the ways of many men and cities.

The Jesuits, be it said, were not unduly eager to undertake the terribly perilous work then to be done in England. Possibly they considered that their advent would embitter the persecution and worsen the lot of the Catholics. The coming of Seminary priests from Douay on the English mission had already led to an ominous change in the direction of greater severity on the part of the Burleigh-Walsingham administration. The English government wanted Catholicism to die out for want of priests and sacraments, and the hanging of Cuthbert Mayne, against whom little could be proved, and over whose case even the judges had differed, showed that it was to be war to the knife! Towards the end of April, 1580, Campion, Fr. Parsons, and a lay-brother named Ralph Emerson, left for England after receiving the blessing of the Pope, Gregory XIII, who liked Englishmen, but not their Queen. Dr Goldwell, Bishop of St Asaph was also of the party, but age, illness, and the Pope's command soon made it expedient for the last of the ancient hierarchy to turn back at Rheims. This "Jesuit Mission" as it has been called, was only one of several like parties then being sent to the blood-stained mission-field beyond the

<sup>1</sup> Thus of Ingolstadt, a supposed typical Catholic city, St Peter Canisius wrote in 1550 "we could not get two people to come to Mass even if we paid them!" See page 155.

Channel. The Jesuits received hospitality from St Charles Borromeo at Milan, and called on Theodore Beza at Geneva. The leader of the Calvinists excused himself from a controversy on church authority with Fr. Parsons on the plea of an important letter which wanted answering immediately. Separating for safety sake, Parsons, disguised as a Captain, got to Dover first, and with the utmost self-possession requested the officials there to show all courtesy to a friend of his, a "jewel merchant," who would arrive very shortly! The "jewel merchant"—Campion of course—and the "Captain" were in London in a few days. The arrival of the Jesuits alarmed others than the government. So fearful were the Catholics in and about London of the probable consequences, that a secret meeting was held in Southwark that July to request the new comers to state their intentions. Both the Fathers declared upon oath "that their coming was only apostolical, to treat of matters of religion in truth and simplicity, and to attend to the gaining of souls without any pretence or knowledge of matters of state." This Meeting of old Marian (secular) priests and some laymen, was a microcosm of the Catholicity of England at that time. There was "no head or authority" over it, while a general "helplessness" was obvious. The presence of the Jesuits was already known to the government by its spies, but Campion, who had plainly told the Roman Curia of the great harm caused in England by the Bull of Pius V, and who had obtained a written permission to allow the English Catholics to acknowledge Elizabeth without censure, now wrote a letter to the Privy Council boldly asking the Right Honourable President to allow a public discussion to take place between himself and "the doctors, masters, and chosen men of both Universities" on the points at issue in religion. The immediate reply to Campion's "Brag and Challenge," as this very temperate appeal was with singular inaptness called, was a hot search in every direction for the two Jesuits. But for months the sleuths of the law were completely baffled, and meanwhile the Campion *furor* passed like a flame from London to Yorkshire and Lancashire. Not only Catholics, but Protestants came in ever-increasing numbers to the secret chapels and meeting-places to hear the illustrious Jesuit discourse. He made men and women feel—many of them perhaps for the first time—that eternity is the only thing that really matters! His sermons were brilliant in style and replete with learning, yet without the curse of dryness that mere pedantry brings. All kinds of legends and reports, of course, grew up around the wonderful Oxonian. One of these makes Elizabeth herself go and listen to him from behind a curtain, and certainly stranger things than that took place in the England of A.D. 1580-1! If Campion was not allowed to meet the doctors and proctors of the two universities in open polemical fight, he soon got at the members of his old *Alma Mater* and in another way! On

27th June, 1581, 400 copies of the famous and secretly printed *Decem Rationes*, were scattered about the benches of St Mary's Oxford, the day of the "Commemoration," and before long hundreds, perhaps thousands were reading a book which was to pass through edition after edition at home and abroad, and to mark an epoch in religious controversy. It was Campion's last lightning stroke however as a free man. On 16th July, 60 Catholics assembled at Lyford Grange, Berkshire, to hear him preach. The owner, Mrs Yates gave hospitality to some dispossessed Bridgettine Nuns there, but one of Leicester's spies, the apostate, Geo. Eliot, got news of the Mass and Sermon at the Grange, and very soon the place was surrounded. Campion might even then have escaped, but when the search had slackened and all was thought to be quiet, the lady of the house foolishly asked the priest to preach again! The alarm was soon given, the search renewed, and in two days the much sought after Jesuit and two other priests were in custody. Campion's capture was felt to be a great catch, and his conformity would have been a greater one to the government. Persuasion of all kinds was tried first, even it is said the mitre of Canterbury! Then the reverse began, the fearful rackings in the Tower which made the valiant champion say at his trial that he "felt not ill because he felt not at all!" But the long proposed Discussion did actually take place. "The Seditious Jesuit," though sickly with torture, and without books or references of any kind, replied so easily and readily to the objectors, that even "the heretics admired him exceedingly." The trial of Campion, Sherwood and six other priests at Westminster Hall, on 20th November, 1581, was for having conspired at Rheims and Rome to depose the Queen and raise a rebellion.

The original charge, that of attaching people to the Church of Rome, was dropped so as to rob the trial of all appearance of persecution! Campion, though still weak from his rackings, had little difficulty in disposing of the perjured evidence of such "witnesses" as Eliot, Sledd and Munday, and in showing the monstrous absurdity of the "conspiracy" accusation. The jury though carefully packed, were evidently impressed by the excellent defence, for they were an hour deliberating before coming to their verdict of guilty. On his way to martyrdom, 1st December, 1581, Campion probably caught a glimpse of his old school, Christ's Hospital, where he may have seen the boys at play or crowding round the gates, and so on to Tyburn with many a living memory. Before the end came, he was called upon to pray for Elizabeth, and it was in the midst of this prayer "for your Queen and my Queen," that the hanging and butchery began of a man—"admirable, subtle, exact and of sweet disposition!" A splash of the blood of the Martyr, who was Beatified by Leo XIII, 29th December, 1886, fell upon one of the crowd, an

enthusiastic young admirer, Henry Walpole, who took the sanguine touch as a call from God to glorify Him by a similar life and death!<sup>1</sup>

[The standard biography of the Blessed Edmund Campion, is that entitled: *Edmund Campion: A Biography*, by Richard Simpson. The author who was an M.A. of Oriel College, Oxford, and sometime Vicar of Mitcham, Surrey, became a Catholic, 1845, the same year as Newman. He was noted for his incisive style and "liberal" views. Died at the Villa Sciarra, Rome, 5th April, 1876. Foley: *Records*, S.J.]

#### DECEMBER 9

#### FOURIER, ST PETER

(1565-1640)

IN 1572 Duke Charles III of Lorraine with the canonical aid and blessing of Gregory XIII, founded a University at Pont-à-Mousson chiefly to defend the Catholic Faith against the propaganda of the neighbouring Huguenot faction, and when a Seminary was added to the place in 1581, Mary Stuart, though then a close prisoner at Sheffield Castle, supplied some bursaries for the benefit of Scottish students. Among the early members of the University was a remarkable boy of the superior peasant class, Peter Fourier, born at Mirecourt, diocese of Toul, 30th November, 1565. He entered the College in 1579, and showed such aptitude for Latin, the great study of the day, that before long he knew the orations of Cicero almost by heart, while as to Greek, despite the awfully forbidding grammars and methods of the period, he spoke it like his native tongue! Though his fellow students were most of them anything but edifying, Peter avoided the seductions and vices the Renaissance had made so common, and so kept himself "unspotted from the world." Meanwhile his father, a well-to-do farmer, was ennobled in 1591 by the Grand-Duchess of Tuscany, daughter of Duke Charles, but Peter by this time had long before this decided on a religious career. In fact at the age of twenty, he entered the Canons-Regular of St Augustine at Chamouzey, but the members might well have been called the Canons Irregular! The rule was badly observed, idleness was rife, and hunting and gambling the common diversions of almost every day! On the 24th of June, 1589, Canon Fourier was ordained priest at Trèves. Meantime, he had studied hard notwithstanding the relaxation all round, acquiring a very competent knowledge of divinity and Canon law and was soon reported to know the Summa of St Thomas by

<sup>1</sup> See under April 7.

heart! By word and example he tried to recall his unworthy brethren to a sense of their duty, but only earned abuse, ridicule, and even personal attack! Finally, and much no doubt to his relief, he received on 28th May, 1597, from the Canons of Haussonville, the appointment of Curé of Mettaincourt, and took possession of it, 1st June that year, almost three hundred years to the day before his canonization.

The town which then contained about a thousand souls, was like so many other places at that time, spiritually destitute. Mass was neglected, scandals were common, and religion generally, at a very low ebb. The new Rector began by beautifying the Church, making the hours of service punctual, and his sermons attractive. He collected the children for Catechism and selected the more intelligent to act little religious dramas in public which were very popular, and did much to dispel the prevailing doctrinal ignorance. He visited the poor frequently, and like Cornelius gave much alms. His own life was one long austerity, praying early and late, going without fire in winter, and sleeping usually on the floor. With a view to improving the professional education of the local parochial clergy, he drew up an excellent treatise entitled *Pratique des Curés*, based on the Catechism of the Council of Trent. As Curé, the holy pastor also enjoyed a sort of jurisdiction corresponding to that of Justice of the peace. He used this authority to compose local differences, settle disputes and correct petty offences, and also to establish a sort of savings-bank and loan-society for the benefit of the working people.

Besides his labours at Mettaincourt, the holy pastor also undertook, at the request of the Bishop of Toul (Christophe de la Vallée), to spread the faith in the more inaccessible parts of the diocese. He won over many Huguenots—"the poor strangers," he used to call them—and like his great contemporary St Francis of Sales among the Vaudois and Chablais, endured all kinds of hardships in this most worthy cause.

St Peter Fourier had early in his career been a private tutor for some time, and about 1597 he set on foot a Society of pious women later known as "Les Filles de Notre Dame," to undertake the education of girls. With episcopal sanction, the Society took vows and lived under rule, the habit and veil being black. Sœur Marie Thérèse de Jesus (Alix Leclerc) was the moving spirit of the Congregation from the first, but for years the holy Founder was worried by dissensions and opposition arising chiefly from the fact that he wished the Nuns to be cloistered, while engaged at the same time in the more or less publicity of scholastic work. There was also trouble about the Mother-House which the Primate of Lorraine wanted to be at Nancy, under a Mother-General acting under his direction. Eventually these difficulties, like all else mundane, also passed away, and before the Saintly Founder's death, the Sisters of Nôtre Dame were not

only flourishing over Lorraine, but in many parts of France. The "Simultaneous Method" or instruction of the whole class in the same subject, and a certain healthy rivalry between the various sections of the pupils, were noteworthy features of the new organization from the commencement.

In 1621, the Bishop of Toul (Jean des Porcelets de Maillane) laid on St Peter Fourier the heavy task of reforming the Augustinian Canons of Lorraine. His plan was to get certain of the more zealous of the Religious to make their noviciate over again and renew their profession. When this was done, these with new recruits were introduced into each House of the Order that the good leaven might leaven the whole mass. By 1629, the new Canons—the Canons of St Sauveur as they came to be called—were definitely organized, and the several reforms had already worked a great change for the better in the formerly relaxed houses. But one great work the holy Founder could not carry out, much as he desired it, and that was boys' schools under these religious similar to the girls' schools under the nuns of his other foundation of Nôtre Dame. That great achievement was apparently reserved for St John Baptist de la Salle and his Christian Brothers at the end of the same century.

In 1632 Canon Fourier was chosen Superior-General of the Saint Sauveur Reform, an office which of course chiefly meant more labour! Like all Saints, he never sought any worldly distinction merely as such. "As Jesus Christ gives Himself to men in the Blessed Sacrament," he used to say, "seeking no return but the good that they shall receive in Communion, so do I give myself to you this day not for the sake of any honour or advantage I may receive, thereby, but only for the Salvation of your Souls." His last years were full of griefs. About 1634, Charles IV Duke of Lorraine openly sided with the Emperor Ferdinand II in the Thirty Years War, and he also allowed his Sister, Margaret, to marry that Jean Gaston, Duke of Orleans, brother of Louis XIII, who was Richelieu's constant enemy. Lorraine was in consequence overrun by French armies, and the oath of allegiance to Louis XIII required of all official personages. Among the exiles that went to Gray in Franche-Comté rather than abandon their native ruler, Duke Charles, was St Peter Fourier. The last four years of his long and strenuous life were spent there as chaplain to the Convent of the Annunciation, and in labouring with his accustomed apostolic zeal for the conversion of souls, notably during the great plague of 1636-37. With some of the Canons Regular who shared his exile, he opened a boys' school at Gray, and at the same time put the finishing touches to his revision of the "Constitutions" of the Filles de Nôtre Dame. In October, 1640, he fell ill of fever. During his last days, parts of the *Imitation* and the *Life of St Augustine* were read to him, and on 19th December following, after receiving with much devotion the holy Viaticum, this great servant

of God expired shortly before midnight. A globe of fire was seen to rise over the town at the moment of his death, and streams of pilgrims for days came to venerate his holy remains which were buried provisionally in the parish Church. The body was carried back in triumph to Mettaincourt in 1641, where, ever since, the tomb of the illustrious originator of so much lasting good has been a place of local pilgrimage. Peter Fourier was Beatified by Benedict XIII in 1730, and Canonized by Leo XIII in 1897, and he shares with St Francis of Sales, St Vincent of Paul, Cardinal de Bérulle and M. Olier—to name but a few contemporaries—the glory of being one of the founders of that religious revival in France which has continued to illumine and promote the cause of the Church ever since.

[*Saint Peter Fourier*, by L. Pingaud. Translated by C. W. W. *The Saints Series*. (London: Duckworth & Co., 1905).]

## DECEMBER II

BELL, O.S.F., THE VENERABLE ARTHUR FRANCIS,  
MARTYR  
(1590–1643)

THE “Glorious Martire” Rev. Fr. Bell, “a Fryar Minor,” as Mother Susanna Joseph Hawkins (1644–1704), a Diarist of the Blue Nuns, Paris, styled him, was the son of William Bell of Temple Broughton, Co. Worcester, by his wife, Dorothy Daniel of Acton Hall, Suffolk. After a classical education under tutors at home, he went to St Omer’s and thence to the English College, Valladolid, where he was ordained priest, 14th April, 1618. On 27th July following, he joined the Franciscans at Segovia, and was professed, 8th September, 1619. After this, he was incorporated into the English Province, O.S.F., and for some years acted as Confessor to the Poor Clares at Gravelines, and the English Franciscan Nuns at Brussels. He had much leisure for study, and devoted a good deal of his time to acquiring a competent knowledge of various languages including Hebrew. He came on the English Mission, 1634, with the title of Guardian of London. After nine years missionary work he was arrested at Stevenage, Herts, 6th November, 1643, by some soldiers of the Parliament with whom he had a discussion on the Pope and the Church which seems to have been temperately conducted by the Roundhead troopers who sent for Bibles, which versions, however, Fr. Bell convicted of gross falsification. Like Fr. Campion in the preceding century, he was, for greater ignominy, led through the streets of London to Newgate tied to his horse. While in prison, he was nominated Guardian of the Franciscan Monastery, Douay. At his trial (Old Bailey), 7th December, 1643, the



notorious apostates Gage, Wadsworth and Mayo, deposed against him. Mayo said he knew the accused as Chaplain to the English Nuns at Gravelines, while Gage declared that he had heard Fr. Bell complain once that a kinswoman of his own rose so late, that he, Bell, could not begin Mass till 12 o'clock! For a time Fr. Bell was priest at West Grinstead, Sussex, in the interesting old mansion of the Caryll family, the last member of which, "Lord Caryll," Prince Charles Edward's faithful attendant, died at Dunkirk, 7th March, 1788, shortly after his *de jure* King.<sup>1</sup> The letter written by the Martyr in prison to his Superior, together with portions of his sandals, hair-shirt and back-bone, are treasured to this day at West Grinstead, as priceless relics of one of the Catholic heroes of penal days. Having said Mass at West Grinstead was in fact one of the several charges against Fr. Bell at the trial. After his conviction, great numbers of persons visited the condemned in prison, and the French Ambassador sent to him to beg remembrance in his prayers. At Tyburn on 11th December, the Martyr exhorted the people to abandon the heresies which had brought the Civil War and so many other divisions and calamities upon the Kingdom. He was allowed to hang the space of a *Miserere*, before the dismembering began. Fr. Bell was the author of *A brief Instruction of how we ought to hear Mass*—a translation from the Spanish of Alejandro Soto and dedicated to Anne Cornwallis, second wife of Archibald Seventh Earl of Argyll. The Earl was some time in the service of Philip III of Spain and partly through his wife's influence became a Catholic many years before his death in 1638.

[*Catholic Record Socy.*, vol. viii. *West Grinstead and Our Sussex Forefathers*, by Irene Hernaman. (Sands & Co.) Challoner: *Memoirs*. Burke's *Peerage*.]

DECEMBER 13

## GRASSI, THE BLESSED ANTHONY, ORATORIAN (1592-1671)

WHEN Anthony Grassi was born at Fermo, Central Italy, 13th November, 1592, St Philip Neri was drawing to the end of his long life, but could he

<sup>1</sup> John Baptist, titular third and last Baron Caryll of Dunford (1714-88), sold the Park and lands of West Grinstead in 1758 to Sir Merrick Burrell. The mission house and grounds were excepted from the sale, and later made over to Bishop Challoner (see Hernaman's *West Grinstead*, p. 80). Lord Caryll entered the service of Prince Charles Edward Stuart and assisted at the marriage of the latter with the Princess Louisa of Stolberg, in the Chapel of the palace of Cardinal Maresfoschi at Macerata, Good Friday, 17th April, 1772. See Andrew Lang: *Prince Charles Edward Stuart, the Young Chevalier*. (Longman's, 1903.)

have foreseen the future, he would no doubt, have rejoiced to know that such a recruit was before many years to be added to his Congregation. The father of the distinguished Oratorian was Vincenzo Grassi, who is described as having been remarkable for his devotion to the Holy House of Loretto. He died when his little son was ten years old, and already conspicuous for piety, and an excellent memory for remembering sermons and discourses almost by heart! He became known to the Fathers of the local Oratory not only on account of this, but also for his punctually serving Mass at the Church daily. His great friend among the Oratorians at this time, was Fr. Flaminio Ricci, a very holy priest, one of whose devout sayings was: "The true service of God is to serve Him when, and in what manner, He pleases, even though it should be in a prison!" At the age of seventeen, young Grassi, after some considerable opposition from his good mother, who had other views for her son, entered the Oratory. He was already so far advanced in classical and general knowledge, as to be known as "the walking Dictionary!" He applied himself no less diligently to his philosophical and theological studies, and he was believed later to know the Scriptures and the Summa of St Thomas well-nigh by heart. After his ordination (1616) he was much sought after as a Confessor, and soon some five or six hours of each day were taken up in the holy tribunal.

Though at the outset of his life in religion, Fr. Grassi was frequently troubled with scruples, he nevertheless overcame this dreadful affliction, and turning the tables on these perverted ideas and the enemy who, no doubt, fosters them, used to console himself and his crowds of penitents by the reflection that "our sins, if we detest them, are in a sense worthy of God, for they are the matter of one of His Sacraments." In 1635, he succeeded Fr. Ignatius Savini as Superior of the Fermo Oratory. His rule was so mild that when asked why he did not show himself more severe, he replied smilingly: "I do not think I should know how to be!" He used also to say with regard to forming an opinion of others, that "one single defect should never be considered in a person, but the whole of his actions should be taken into account, as in these as a rule, more good than evil is to be found." Besides gently directing his brethren and hearing a vast number of Confessions, Fr. Grassi also devoted much time to consoling the sick in the hospitals, and administering the last Sacraments to the dying. His holy wisdom and wide general knowledge, caused him to be consulted frequently on all kinds of topics, and one of these "clients." Cardinal Facchinetti, Archbishop of Spoleto, used to say of him: "I never knew a man, in all my life, who took things so calmly, or who kept his mind so constantly raised to God." Another who sought his guidance, was the Bishop of San Severino, afterwards Pope Clement X. Fr. Grassi

also greatly aided in the work of founding orphanages and refuges for penitents, and during the bread riots caused by the famine of 1649, he acted as mediator between the governor and the people. Like St Francis of Assisi, he loved flowers and singing birds, as in some sort the faint, humble emblems of the celestial joys. While saying Holy Mass, this eminent son of St Philip—the example of whose life he was never tired of citing—seemed to be wrapt in ecstasy, and he was remarkable, also, for a constant devotion to the guardian angels. His holy death occurred, 13th December, 1671. Fr. Anthony Grassi was Beatified by Leo XIII (1900).

[*A Saint of the Oratory*, by Lady Annabel Kerr. (Burns, Oates & Washbourne, 1901.)]

DECEMBER 25

ST EUGENIA, V.M.

(?—257 or 259)

[For life of this Saint, see Butler's *Lives of the Fathers, Martyrs and other Saints*, Original Edition, 1756-1759.]

DECEMBER 29

HOWARD, THE BLESSED WILLIAM, VISCOUNT STAFFORD,  
MARTYR

(1614-1680). Beatified Dec. 15, 1929.

NEARLY every school history of England has a short but sympathetic reference to William Howard, Viscount Stafford, whose death on Tower Hill, 29th December, 1680, closes the long official list of the lay martyrs for the Catholic Faith in this country. Some people, it is said, are born to greatness, others have it thrust upon them! If we substitute the word "fame" for greatness we have exactly what happened to this high-born nobleman of the ill or happy fate, according as we view the tragedy that closed his earthly career. Sir William Howard, K.B., fifth son of Thomas, Earl of Arundel, whose name survives in the famous Greek Marbles which are part of the classic glories of Oxford, was born, 30th November, 1614. His wife, Mary daughter of the fifth and last Baron Stafford, was descended from Henry VIII's victim, the splendid Duke of Buckingham, Edward Stafford, Lord High Constable, whose death on Tower Hill, 1521, may be said to

have commenced the long roll of judicial murders of that odious period. Charles I made Sir William Howard, Baron Stafford in 1640, and then to solve a peerage difficulty that had arisen, owing to a question relating to the Barony being held by *writ*, and not by *creation*, the King cut the knot by advancing the newly-made Peer to a Viscountcy.

During the Civil War, Lord Stafford went abroad on a diplomatic mission on behalf of the King. Most likely the object was something financial. The Oxford Colleges were melting down their loving-cups, tankards and salvers into "Siege-Pieces" for his Most Sacred Majesty, and the Queen herself was in Holland pawning even the crown jewels for the royal cause. During his absence, Stafford was denounced as a "malignant," by the "godly," and his estates were sequestered. Though his goods were apparently restored after the Restoration, pursuant to a resolution of the House of Lords (30th June, 1660), Stafford, like many another of the Cavalier party thought himself ill requited by the King; though had the amorous Monarch all the gold mines of Peru at his command, he could scarcely have adequately requited, according to their own notions on the subject, all who had suffered—or professed to have suffered!—for the royal cause. Stafford's law suits with several members of his own family—the various branches of the ducal house of Howard—over property, and a heated altercation on one occasion in the House of Lords with Henry Mordaunt, Earl of Peterborough, all go to show that his Lordship was, to say the least, somewhat difficult of disposition, and it also accounts for the saying, recorded later by Evelyn, that "my Lord Stafford was not a man beloved especially of his own family!"

All this makes it easy to account for the fact why this very assertive and, no doubt, capable, nobleman was selected by Titus Oates as the supposed "Paymaster" of that mythical "Popish Army," which was, according to the arch-perjurer, to invade England, subjugate the realm, and submerge the ruins of its Constitution, Protestantism and liberties generally, beneath seas of patriotic blood! The proximity of the Gallico-Catholic Louis XIV, his well-drilled armies, able captains such as Louvois, Condé and the rest, lent local colour to the whole of the wild accusation. It is not so easy however to see why, when the five Catholic Lords, Petre, Powis, Arundel, Bellasis and Stafford were in the Tower in connection with the "Plot," Lord Stafford should have been considered the one most suitable to be brought to trial, because "weaker" than the others, and so less able "to labour his defence." The event proved quite the contrary. During the seven days hearing of the case before the Peers, presided over by Lord (Chancellor) Nottingham, as Lord-High-Steward, Stafford made a very skilful defence, but the "No Popery" furore out of doors, and the sustained perjured evidence of Oates, Dugdale, etc., all told heavily against

him. The excellent point he raised about two witnesses being required by the Statute, *1 Edw. VI, cap. 12*, for each overt act of treason, was overruled by the judges, though on what strict legal grounds it is not easy to say.<sup>1</sup> The unpopularity of the accused with his own kindred has been alluded to, but no doubt fear and self-preservation were the real reasons why all the Howard Lords, save Lord Mowbray, gave their verdict against their unfortunate relation—such is family affection!

The excitement throughout the country was such that as Charles II himself said later, "he dared not pardon anybody!" so the iniquitous verdict and capital sentence were allowed to stand. The King, however, who at heart did not doubt of Stafford's complete innocence, changed the mode of death from hanging and quartering to beheading, which goes to prove that the latter form of execution accorded to peers for treason, is really a *privilege*, the "constitutional" method of despatch in these cases—as Dickens's Mr Denis would have remarked—being the rope. Lord William Russell, the Whig patriot inhumanly objected to the King's "leniency," and later, when his own life hung in the balance owing to the Rye House Plot, he got a reply from Charles which must have brought poignant reflections!<sup>2</sup> The condemned Viscount's last days were spent in devotion, in conversing with his family and friends and in noble resignation, as became a great Catholic Peer unjustly doomed to death out of hatred of the Faith. On the scaffold at Tower Hill, 29th December, 1680, the Feast of St Thomas of Canterbury, he urged the people to be loyal to the Sovereign—"as good and gracious a King as ever reigned"—and categorically denied the infamous and indeed patently absurd accusations that had been laid to his charge, as well as the many slanders against the Church—"King-killing"—"no faith with heretics"—"indulgences to commit sin," etc., etc., which have been so largely responsible for the traditional animosity against Catholicism in this country. The people's shouts of "God bless you, my Lord, we believe you my Lord," were still ringing in Stafford's ears when that worthy nobleman received the fatal stroke that laid him at rest for ever. His son, Henry Howard, was made Earl of Stafford by James II, 1688, but the peerage became extinct on the death of Earl John Paul Stafford Howard in 1762. After much genealogical

<sup>1</sup> The Statute of Edward VI (1552) required, as stated above, two witnesses to each overt act of treason. The Judges in Stafford's case ruled unanimously that it was sufficient for one witness to prove one overt act, and another witness the other act, if both acts were directed to accomplish the same treason! This decision, which practically annulled the Act of Edward VI referred to, was based on the ruling in Christopher Love's case, 1651.

<sup>2</sup> The King granted the same privilege (decapitation) to Lord Russell after his conviction in the affair of the Rye House Plot, 1683, saying as he did so: "My Lord Russell will now see I *have* a power to change his sentence, which he denied me in the case of my Lord Stafford!"

inquiry and other efforts, chiefly by Mr Edward Jerningham, barrister-at-law (1774-1822), the Attainder was reversed by Act, 17th June, 1824, and Sir George William Stafford Jerningham declared to have made out his claim to the title, honour and dignity of the Barony of Stafford, created 16th September, 1640.

[C. Knight: *History of England*, vol. iii. Sir Harris Nicolas and William Courthope: *Historic Peerage of England. The Jerningham Letters*, vol. ii, Edited by Egerton Castle.]



## APPENDIX

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ST JOHN BOSCO

BLESSED EUPHRASIA PELLETIER

ST MARGARET OF HUNGARY

H. NICHOLAUS VON DER FLÜE

ST GEMMA GALGANI

ST BERNARDINO REALINO

ST FRANCES XAVIER CABRINI

ST CATHERINE LABOURÉ

ST JOAN OF FRANCE

ST ELIZABETH BICHIER

BLESSED VINCENT MARY PALLOTTI

ST ANTONIO JUAN CLARET

ST JOSEPH CAFASSO

ST MARIA GORETTI

BLESSED MARGARET BOURGEOYS

BLESSED ANTHONY PUCCI

BLESSED ROSA VENERINI

BLESSED PIUS X, POPE

## ST JOHN BOSCO, FOUNDER OF THE SALESIAN CONGREGATION

(1815-1888)

FROM the first the Catholic Church has ever borne in mind our Saviour's words: "For the poor you have always with you" (*St Mark* xiv. 7), and from the days of the "Peace of Constantine" to the present she has been unwearying in saving and protecting the Children of the Poor. The "Noscomia" and "Xenodochia" of the Early Christian centuries have given place to the more elaborate hostels, refuges and orphanages, especially since the labours of St Vincent of Paul, St Peter Claver, St John Baptist de la Salle—to mention but a few leaders in the Crusade of rescue—have raised the work from its primitive beginnings into a branch of religious social science.

John Melchior Bosco, the latest Apostle and Saint of Catholic organized charity, was born at Becchi, a little hamlet near Castelnuovo, Piedmont, Italy, 16th August, 1815, the day after another friend of the poor and suffering, St John Baptist Vianney, the Curé d'Ars, said his first Mass. Like the Thaumaturge of nineteenth-century France, our Saint spent much of his first years as a shepherd, but meantime his education was not neglected. The parish priest taught him to read and write, and later, Latin, while his saintly mother, "the Mama Margaret," so long associated with his work for souls, instilled into him those habits of devotion which, under God, were to bring about a veritable revolution for good throughout the world. The death of her husband, Francis Bosco, when the subject of this notice was two years old, must have been a serious loss to Signora Bosco and her young family of three sons. For one thing, it left her to contend single-handed not only with the management of a small farm, but still more with the solution of the problem of her step-son, Anthony, a somewhat wayward and sullen character. Finally, the difficult member of the household left home to undertake the care of a small property of his own, and in 1835 his younger brother John, now grown to man's estate, passed his examination and entered the Seminary at Chièri, where he proved a diligent, nay, model student. There he was ordained priest on Trinity Sunday, 1841, by Mgr. Franzoni, the Archbishop of Turin, and afterwards a Cardinal. It was this distinguished prelate who ordained John Henry Newman to the priesthood in Rome, 30th May, 1847.

Part of the parochial labours of the young priest was visiting the prisons of the City, and it was there that the Abate Bosco came into contact with many young lads, not inherently bad, but led into vicious courses



by want and neglect. It was, however, the case of a ragged boy turned away from the Church by an irate, but no doubt, long-suffering sacristan, that immediately interested our Saint in the work that was to be so peculiarly his own. He befriended the poor waif, Bartholemew Garelli; and regarding this chance acquaintance as a type of a large class, Don Bosco—to give him the name by which he will probably always be known—began his labours on its behalf by a sort of “Club” for poor boys, chiefly those employed in the factories and workshops of the City. So successful was this undertaking that in March, 1846, the “Oratory”—as the Sodality was called after the famous foundations of St Philip Neri, another Apostle of Souls—already numbered four hundred. As many of these poor lads had no fixed abode, a sort of hostel or Refuge was opened, and about this time, Don Bosco received a very valuable assistant in Don Borel, another priest who now joined him in the wonderful crusade. A night-school was presently opened, but as usual, the “Cross” suddenly came to try the work and seal it with the hall-mark of divine approval. The neighbours complained of the noise and other inconveniences caused by the daily assembling of numbers of rough, ill-disciplined boys. “Respectable” people could not understand all this solicitude over such undesirable elements, and the malicious even said that the promoter was “insane”! The same charge of “madness” had been brought in the previous century against General Wolfe by short-sighted ministers and jealous staff officers, who could not, or would not, understand the young hero’s magnificent schemes which were to add Canada to the Empire. Shrewd old George II, who knew better, wittily expressed the hope that Wolfe would “bite” these mediocrities and give them a little of his vision and enthusiasm! Don Bosco “bit” his detractors by prayer and perseverance. Removing his Refuge to another and more retired site, it was reopened on an even larger scale in a rough building which had the further advantage of a good-sized field as a playground. Mama Margaret came to superintend the domestic arrangements and add a touch of feminine refinement to the many rough masculine inmates who now numbered seven hundred. It was a herculean task, and once the resolution of this valiant woman nearly broke down. “I cannot go on. I cannot stand these boys,” the sorely tried mother said to her son, who replied by pointing to the Crucifix. The “field was won,” and the holy and self-sacrificing Matron remained on to help to consolidate a work which was now arousing interest in many parts of Italy. The tide had indeed turned, and soon the municipal authorities, not only in Turin but elsewhere, came to recognize and to assist the movement, which was literally “saving” thousands of poor children from fates deplorable and even tragic. The primitive buildings and crude makeshifts of the first beginnings were soon replaced by sub-

stantial and even imposing structures, and in 1868, a fine Church in the Valdocco quarter of Turin spiritually crowned, so to speak, the material labours that had resulted in fine workshops, schools and other like developments of the now famous Salesian Congregation. The growth of the work had, indeed, been phenomenal. Despite the agitation throughout the country caused by the "United Italy" movement, the struggle with Austria and the revolutionary propaganda and campaigns of Mazzini Garibaldi and others, the religious and social foundation of our Saint spread. In 1857, the priests and assistants were formed into the "Salesian Congregation," deriving its title from St Francis of Sales, to whom Don Bosco had ever a deep devotion as a famous lover of souls, and model of sympathy, zeal and charity. Provisionally approved in 1869 by Pius IX, whose kindly and enthusiastic nature so nearly resembled Don Bosco's own, the "Rule" was finally confirmed by the same Pontiff in 1874. Since then the Congregation has spread to all the five Continents, the Colleges, Schools, Churches and other developments connected with it, numbering 616 in January, 1929.

The method of Don Bosco was to train character chiefly by solid instruction in the Faith, constant example, and those appeals to that element of good there is even in the apparently most unpromising individuals. Punishments of the traditional kind were unknown. Games, music, country rambles and interesting discourses formed part of the recreation. St Philip Neri's dictum: "Do as you wish provided you do not sin!" was constantly on the lips of this Apostle of Youth. The enormous effect for good of the Salesian method gained admirers in unlikely quarters. Among the friends and patrons of the schools of the wonderful foundation were such personages as King Victor Emmanuel and his powerful minister, Ratazzi, the wayward, but good-natured, "Re Galantuomo," always sending each year a substantial donation to Don Bosco and his young *protégés*.

The work of the Salesian Congregation, though originally for the poor, has followed that seemingly inevitable trend *upward* which marks nearly all organic life, and it now embraces high-class colleges, as well as schools and technical institutes for the children of the proletariat. A Congregation of Salesian Nuns—the "Daughters of Our Lady, Help of Christians"—was founded in August, 1872, and like the Fathers and Brothers, they have now many Convents in different parts of the world. The Salesians began their work in England at Trott Street, Battersea, in November, 1887, and they possess at present (1935) eight houses in this country.

Apart from his practical labours for Souls, Don Bosco made time for much literary output. About a hundred books and pamphlets came from his active pen. These include: *A Bible History*, remarkable for its

comprehensiveness and clearness, largely used in Italy; an *Ecclesiastical History* for secondary schools; and a *History of Italy*, this last translated into English. A manual of Prayers and Instructions compiled by him reached its hundred and twenty-second edition in the Saint's lifetime, and it is still in use. Like many of the elect of God, Don Bosco, despite his almost constant outward cheerfulness, suffered much from interior dryness, depression and that sense of the uselessness of effort which forms the special temptation of those engaged in work for Souls. Though so fearfully harassed by these and numberless other trials of a peculiarly distressing nature, he ever preserved that serenity of soul which marks the true soldier of the Lord.

He possessed that gift so often found in persons of exalted Sanctity of discerning vocations and careers. A notable instance of this is related with reference to the late Archbishop of Westminster, Cardinal Francis Bourne. As a very young priest, his Eminence went to stay with Don Bosco with the idea of trying his vocation in the Salesian Congregation, which he had always greatly admired, and to which he was ever so sincere a friend. The holy Founder, however, informed the young aspirant, after due consideration, that God had not called him to this mode of life, but that another and more prominent destiny awaited him in England! John Melchior Bosco departed from this mortal sphere, which he had done so much to improve and edify, on 31st January, 1888, and almost instinctively the whole Catholic world felt that it had lost a Saint. Declared "Venerable" by Pius X, 24th July, 1907, the Founder of the Salesians was Beatified by Pius XI on 9th June, 1929. His Canonization at St Peter's by the same Pontiff, on Easter Sunday, 1st April, 1934, was the signal for those rejoicings everywhere which mark the supreme honour paid by the Church to those of her children who have "instructed many unto justice," and laboured to restore the lost sheep to Christ's eternal fold.

BLESSED MARY OF ST EUPHRASIA PELLETIER, FIRST  
SUPERIOR OF THE CONGREGATION OF OUR LADY  
OF CHARITY OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD OF ANGERS  
(1796-1868)

THE French Revolution, which seemed to so many outside the Church to herald the end of Catholicism, was in fact, under God, to be the beginning of a new and glorious era for the Faith. The Jacobin fury, which swept away the altar and the throne in France, was the "baptism of fire" from which was to issue forth a whole host of regenerated children, with

their manifold labours and achievements for the Church and for Souls. Among the pioneers of this stupendous restoration must be reckoned Rose Virginie Pelletier, Foundress of the Nuns of the Good Shepherd. Born 31st July, 1796, on the romantic island of Noirmoutier in Brittany, where her father, Dr Jules Pelletier, was in medical practice, she was brought up amidst scenes and memories connected with the then very recent heroic Vendean struggle against the fiends of the Revolution, and a fitting influence indeed for one who was herself to be a true heroine, though in the spiritual order. In 1808, when twelve years of age, Rose became a pupil at the convent of the Ursuline Nuns opened that year at Noirmoutier, for the Concordat was now some six years in force, Napoleon was at the height of his amazing power, and religion, though trammelled by the "Organic Articles," was making headway almost everywhere in France. Of an ardent and even impetuous nature, Rose Pelletier had even at this time felt the call of "vocation." "I shall be a nun," said the youthful enthusiast, who however added with wonderful and holy precocity: "I shall have to be broken-in first!" By 1813, the young aspirant had lost both her parents and several sisters by death, but she was already on the eve of realizing her sacred ambition. At Tours, where she had been sent "to finish her education" as the phrase went, there was a house of the "Sisters of Our Lady of Charity," founded by St John Endes in 1641, for female penitents. Such a work, which combined cloistered devotion with daily labour for Souls, appealed powerfully to Rose Pelletier, and after some opposition from her guardian, M. Marsand, she was accepted as a postulant, 20th October, 1814, receiving the habit in September of the following year. The name in religion assigned her was that of St Euphrasia, a princess of the house of the Emperor Theodosius, who died a nun, full of sanctity and works, in Egypt, A.D. 410. Sister Euphrasia was soon recognized as an elect soul. "She will do great things one day, there is something beyond the ordinary in her," was said of her more than once in the Convent. She was professed, 9th September, 1817, when only twenty-one years of age, and in 1827, at the age of thirty, was elected Superior by special Papal dispensation. The "great things" prognosticated of her, were to the end of her life to be almost continuous, and they soon began. In 1829 a large factory and premises were acquired as a convent at Angers, and two years later Mother Pelletier went there for good. Extensive buildings, including a fine chapel, quickly transformed the place. A community of "Magdalens" was formed from among the penitents, and a "Preservation Class" for young girls in danger from evil surroundings was also formed. The "Magdalens" live under rule, wearing a brown "habit" and silver cross, and they have ever since formed a valuable if subordinate branch

of the work of the Good Shepherd Congregation. The growth of the work was indeed phenomenal. Within the next few years houses sprang up in succession at Mons, Poitiers, Grenoble, Amiens, Strasbourg, Rheims, Lens and Arles. But such a development urged a great and necessary change. Up till then, the houses of the Congregation were each independent, which resulted in frequent overlapping, confusion and loss of time, money and energy. The master-mind of Mother Euphrasia saw that a "Generalate," *i.e.* a head-house, generally supervising and directing all the branches, was called for, and after determined opposition, not only from local Superiors, but even the Archbishop of Tours, she got her way. Her wonderful silence in the face of much misrepresentation and blame won the admiration of Pope Gregory XVI, who saw in this saintly attitude a proof of the righteousness of her cause, and the decree, establishing the "Mother house" at Angers, was signed in March, 1835. The requisite changes in discipline and routine introduced by this act virtually established what was in effect a new Congregation—that of "Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd at Angers." Mother Euphrasia visited Rome in 1843, and in the Eternal City two houses of her foundation have been doing their special work for nearly a century. In May, 1841, the first house of the Good Shepherd was opened in London at King's Street, Hammersmith. Hammersmith, then almost a rural suburb, was chosen no doubt from its Catholic associations dating back far into the penal times. The Benedictine Nuns of "Cupola House," the old "Roman Catholic Nunnery" at Hammersmith, welcomed and assisted the newcomers. Larger premises at "Beauchamp Lodge" were soon taken, and among those who evinced interest in the work was Lady Peel, wife of the famous Prime Minister. Within thirty years branch houses to the number of about a dozen had been formed at Dalbeth (Glasgow), Manchester, Liverpool, Cardiff, Bristol, and other places. The house at Ashford, Middlesex, opened in 1899, was removed to much more spacious premises at Staplehurst, Kent, in 1935. That the "saving" work of the Good Shepherd Foundation makes a wide appeal is proved by the fact that it attracts "subjects" from every class, for the instinct, or grace rather, of active charity is world-wide, and it is in the religious orders of world-wide Church, and regulated by their traditional and guiding wisdom, that this great virtue finds its best exponent.

A large volume might be written on the interior life alone of this wonderful woman, but we can only touch upon a few of its salient features. Like all the children of the elect, Mother Euphrasia was devoted to prayer, and to that ready obedience to God's holy will—a will often so distasteful in its manifestation and circumstances! Though, as stated, somewhat impulsive by nature, she had indeed "broken herself in," as she once

said half in jest, and what was a foible at most had been transformed into perfectly disciplined zeal. Her active labours in connection with the development of her life's work added no less than one hundred and ten houses to the Foundation before her death. Yet she managed to find time—by the rigid economizing of precious minutes—to accomplish almost everything that was necessary or useful for the consolidation of the Congregation. Personally, her own life was ever most holy and mortified—mortified mainly by a cheerful and ready submission to the apparent failures and disappointments of life—trials which may be described as God's hair shirts and disciplines we all must endure willingly or unwillingly. Her words of holy wisdom, joined to the constant teaching of her own example, yet animate and encourage countless souls. Mother Euphrasia died after a long and painful illness borne with characteristic happy resignation at the Generalate, Angers, 24th April, 1868, and it is in the Chapel of the place that her venerated remains repose. She was declared "Venerable" by Leo XIII, 11th December, 1897, and "Blessed" by Pius XI on Good Shepherd Sunday, 1933. Further details of this great Foundress and her multifarious labours in the cause of Christian virtue and charity, are set forth in *Blessed Mary of St Euphrasia Pelletier* (second edition), by a Religious of the Congregation—an admirable work full of interesting information, and most readable in style.

JANUARY 18<sup>1</sup>

ST MARGARET OF HUNGARY

(1242-1271)

THE short life of St Margaret of Hungary is perhaps unique in some of its respects in the list of the Canonized. She was born in the purple, being the daughter of Bela I, King of Hungary and his consort, Queen Marie Laskaris.

From her cradle she was dedicated to a religious life by her parents, as a sort of thank-offering to God for the deliverance of the country from a threatened invasion from the Tartars under their terrible leader Genghis Khan, the oriental Attila, who having ravaged Asia from China to the frontiers of India, seems to have contemplated attacking Europe also, when death happily put an end to his ambition.

At a very early age, little Margaret entered the Dominican Convent at Veszprem, but went when about ten to the Convent of Our Lady,

<sup>1</sup> "The Book of Saints," St Augustine's Abbey, Ramsgate.

founded by the King her father, at Hasen Insel, near Budapest. There she took the Solemn Vows—apparently by special Indult—at the very early age of eighteen.

Her whole life in the Order was passed in obscurity, devoted to almost incessant prayer, the practice of great personal mortification and in faithfully performing even the humblest domestic duties of the House. The fame of her sanctity, meanwhile, increased, and at her death (1271) a widespread movement arose for her Canonization, supported by the record of no less than seventy-four alleged miracles—mostly the cures of diseases regarded as incurable—and piously attributed to her intercession.

About 1275 the process was begun at Rome, but not continued. It was not recommenced, in fact, till 1640, and then only to be again postponed! In 1770, Count Ignatius Batthyanyi of the illustrious family so well known in the annals of Austria-Hungary, added his great influence to get the cause taken up again, but with no better result at the time.

In July, 1789, however, Pope Pius VI consented to her Veneration as a Saint, though without formal Canonization, and his successor, Pius VII, raised her Feast to a double of the second class, and there the matter rested till about 1942, when Dr Kellay, the Hungarian Premier, amidst the terrors and confusions of the recent Great War, presented on behalf of his government a petition to the present Pope, praying for the Canonization of the long dead Blessed Margaret. The petition was favourably received, and after a further investigation by the Sacred Congregation of Rites, the Decree of Canonization was given in Rome on the Feast of St Elizabeth, November 19, 1943, ordering "that the name of the Blessed Margaret, Virgin, of the Royal Family of Arpadensi ('e regia Arpadensium familia'), and a Holy Nun of the Order of St Dominic, was to be inscribed in the Catalogue of the Saints." Her Feast is kept on January 18.<sup>1</sup> This very protracted "cause" recalls another of the kind, that of St Bernard of Menthon—Founder of the great Hospice in the Alps for succouring lost and snow-bound wayfarers—who, although his holy death occurred at Novara in 1008, was not Canonized till 1681, when Pope Innocent XI added his name to the Calendar of the Saints, as yet another shining example of devotion to personal sanctity and the furtherance of practical charity.

<sup>1</sup> See "Acta Apostolicae Sedis," February 18, 1944.

MARCH 21

H. NICHOLAUS VON DER FLÜE

(1417-1487)

NICHOLAUS VON DER FLÜE, after some years spent in military service, returned to his native country, Switzerland, settled down on his estate, married and became the father of ten children. After the death of his wife, and having provided for all his family in life, he became a hermit, and for twenty years led a very mortified existence, and acquired a great local reputation for sanctity. At his death, his tomb became a place of pilgrimage, and many miracles have been attributed to his holy intercession. He was Canonized by Pope Pius XII, May 4, 1947.

MAY 14

ST GEMMA GALGANI

(1878-1903)

ST GEMMA GALGANI appears to belong to that large number of Canonized persons whose mission it was to attain to extraordinary sanctity while living in the world, and chiefly by the most difficult way of cheerfully accepting the heavy disappointments of life as so many manifestations of God's holy will. But in addition to the successful accomplishment of this exalted ideal, the subject of this narrative was largely instrumental in preparing the way for the establishment of a Convent in her native town, one devoted to the Passion of our Lord, and constantly offering up its prayers, works and sufferings for the needs of the Church and its Vicar on earth.

Gemma Galgani was born at Camigliano, near Lucca, on March 12, 1878. She was the eighth child of Henry Galgani and Aurelia his wife. About a month after her birth the family removed to Lucca where Signor Galgani had a thriving business as a chemist. Little Gemma learnt the rudiments of Christian piety from her parents, for the household was a thoroughly devout one, and it was by her mother's side in the Parish Church that she came to appreciate the awful and mystic significance of the Holy Mass: "The only true thing left in our time," as even the anti-Catholic historian Carlyle once described it.<sup>1</sup> Not long after the death of this excellent mother, Gemma went to the Convent School of the Sisters of St Zita in the town. It was in more senses than one a very suitable school

<sup>1</sup> See "Jewels of the Mass," by Percy Fitzgerald, M.A. (Burns, Oates & Washbourne).



for such a child, for the titular patroness had been of the world, not the cloister, and she had won her crown by a life of sanctity as a servant in a private family. During her pupilage, Gemma acquired a great love of prayer joined to a tender devotion to the Passion of Our Lord. Her constant petition was, "Holy Virgin, make me a Saint," and she said the whole Rosary daily on her knees. She did not make her first communion till June, 1887, as custom then was opposed to the very early times of communion which have since become prevalent. She did well in her studies, and when about sixteen years of age, gained in open competition a gold medal for her favourite subjects, Church History and Religious Knowledge. Her school life was brought to a rather sudden end by a painful disease—*caries* of the bone of the foot—which involved long treatment and a major operation. Like the true Christian heroine she was, she refused an anaesthetic for this latter ordeal, to the amazement and admiration of the surgeons and others present. It had been her father's wish that she should attend the higher courses of the university, but she elected to remain at home and take, as far as she could, her late mother's place.

Much of her spare time was devoted to instructing poor children, visiting the sick in the hospitals, and relieving the poor in their own homes. Her own life was a continual prayer, her chief book of devotion the Crucifix—that sacred symbol of our Redemption which has taught so many the way of eternal life.

When Gemma was nearly twenty years of age she lost her excellent father, who died in November, 1897. He had prospered formerly in his business, but a certain carelessness in later years, and a too generous disposition in the matter of helping others, had greatly lessened his gains. The Galgani family, in fact, found itself reduced to something like penury, and as if to complete the financial catastrophe, Gemma was, about this time, attacked by what proved to be tuberculosis of the spine. She was then living with an aunt, who, though far from well-off, did everything possible to make her invalid niece happy. But by February, 1899, the case of the patient was declared by the doctors to be hopeless. It was at this crisis that commenced the series of incidents now to be recorded. Gemma's devotion to the Sacred Passion had been much fostered by reading and meditating upon The Life of St Gabriel of Our Lady of Sorrows, the young Passionist Brother, whose wonderful spiritual career is recorded in this book (pp. 261-67). Gemma always solemnly declared that it was this ardent lover of the Cross who more than once appeared to her, and who even helped her to make a Novena of prayer that she might be cured.

On the first Friday of March, 1899, after receiving holy communion, a sudden and permanent cessation of the complaint took place, to the

complete mystification of the doctors who were unable to account for the wholly inexplicable result.

Gemma had long wished to enter a convent, and now the way seemed to be clear, but the ecclesiastical authorities, who apparently were not satisfied that the recent cure was a permanent one, refused to sanction her entry into an Order or religious congregation. Gemma, as usual, accepted the decision as the manifestation of God's will in her regard, and it was at this time that she is stated to have received the great external sign of Our Lord's favour—the Stigmata, or visible marks of the five holy wounds, a gift also believed by many mystic theologians and spiritual writers to have been imparted to St Paul, who preached "Christ Crucified." Gemma was now living with a pious family consisting of a father, mother and eleven children, some of the older of whom were actively engaged in various good works connected with some kind of "Catholic Action."

A priest who resided at the house has left on record his impressions of Gemma's constant "spirit of recollection and union with God," which, joined to a faithful discharge of her domestic duties and charitable undertakings, went further to fill up the measure of an exalted sanctity.

Apparently free as she now was from her recent malady, Gemma once more bethought herself of a religious vocation, and the Passionist Convent at Corneto seemed to be indicated. But her application, in spite of the strong support of Monsignor Volpi, a former spiritual director, and of a Father Germanus, her application was, as in the case of the former one, rejected. So far from repining, Gemma redoubled her already great religious fervour, reciting daily the Divine Office, which is part of the rule of the Passionist Congregation—whose door had been closed against her!

She predicted that a House of the Nuns would one day be founded in Lucca—a prophecy which was fulfilled two years after her death.

Taking the decision against her entry into the Congregation as final, she used to say: "I no longer wish to enter a convent, Jesus has the habit of a Passionist Nun awaiting me at the Gates of Paradise."

The future convent of which she so often spoke was opened in 1908, amidst much rejoicing, and the special blessing of the saintly Pope, Pius X. One of the chief objects of the new foundation was to pray and work for Holy Mother Church and the needs of the Sovereign Pontiff—intentions ever since faithfully kept in mind.

Gemma Galgani's short, but most wonderful, life ended in one of those mysterious illnesses which had been among the trials vouchsafed her for her perfecting. In 1902 a "racking sickness," diagnosed as a form of "tuberculosis," first made its appearance. Though suffering intensely, and confined to bed, she continued her meditations on the Passion, and increased her prayers as an act of expiation for the general sad forgetfulness

of so many Christians who live and die almost oblivious of the great price paid for their Redemption.

In one of her letters she had written : " What is sweeter than to be filled with the thought of Jesus, and to kneel before that Divine Victim of Love and Sorrow ! I would willingly give every drop of my blood to please Him and to prevent sinners offending Him ! " Consoled by the last holy rites of the Church and with " a look of seraphic joy " on her face, the soul of Gemma Galgani passed from this world shortly after midday of April 11, 1903.

The fame of the sanctity of this prominent servant of God rapidly spread, for all recognized that Gemma Galgani was one of those rare souls who leave this world distinctly better for having lived in it. Though not a member of the Congregation she had so longed to enter, her sacred remains repose near the altar of the Convent Chapel of the Passionist Nuns at Lucca—a constant reminder of a true spiritual daughter of St Paul of the Cross, and a tribute to one who was, in all but name, the Foundress of this Holy House. Her Beatification by Pius XI took place on March 14, 1933, the Canonization by Pius XII following on Ascension Day, 1940.

The thunders and devastations of the second Great War were reverberating around the distracted nations, but the event, like so many others of the kind, was yet another reminder to all of goodwill, that God is ever glorified in His Saints, and though upheavals come and go, the Cross stands while the world turns round !

JULY 2

ST BERNARDINO REALINO

(1530-1616)

BERNARDINO REALINO was educated for the legal profession, and later became a magistrate in Italy. He entered the Society of Jesus in middle life, and soon showed not only great personal holiness, but also marked organizing ability. To him was due the foundation of several Jesuit Houses in the north of Italy. His devotion to the Holy Mother of God was remarkable, and he is believed to have seen her in vision on more than one occasion. He died at Lecce in Apulia, July 2, 1616, aged eighty-six, and was Canonized by Pope Pius XII, May 4, 1947.

DECEMBER 22

ST FRANCES XAVIER CABRINI

(1850-1917)

"The Saint of the Emigrants."

WHEN about the latter part of the eighteenth century the grasping policy of so many unworthy chiefs and lairds was literally driving thousands of their clansmen from the Highlands to seek new homes and a happier life in North America, the Catholic exiles were almost invariably accompanied by their priests, to be the guides and comforters of their suffering people. Well would it have been if in similar exoduses everywhere in later years, the enforced emigrants had been likewise thus spiritually provided for.

The vast emigrations caused by the economic and social revolution, which followed in the wake of "Italia Unita" in the mid and latter nineteenth century to the same part of the world, had unfortunately no such aids to religion and good order. So in the expanding cities and lonely prairies of the Far West, demoralization and spiritual destitution grew up with their almost endless disastrous consequences, and it was to ameliorate this deplorable result that inspired the heroic apostolate which made up the chief life-work of the subject of this notice.

Frances Xavier Cabrini, who was born July 15, 1850, came of the hard-headed Lombard race that forms such a contrast to the more emotional and "dreamy" inhabitants of the Italian South. Born at Saint Angelo, a small town near Lodi—the site of one of Napoleon's most famous victories—she entered life under the glamour of a mighty name. Her father, Agosto Cabrini, was a well-to-do landowner. Her mother, Stella Oldini, belonged to the Brera family of Milan. Both parents were devout Catholics. Mass was heard daily, and the evening was fitly concluded with family prayers in common. A great love of home marked the whole household—a trait which seems to have been traditional, for an ancestor is stated to have forfeited a legacy rather than journey to Rome to receive it!

Little Frances was a delicate child, but one with the appearance of strong character. Her elder sister, Rosa, who had a diploma as teacher, undertook the education of her younger brothers and sisters, and so in the happy precincts of domesticity Frances grew up in all the good traditions that so powerfully affect future life. She was confirmed in 1858, and at the age of nine made her first Holy Communion with great fervour. Her vocation was early manifested in her favourite amusement, that of dressing up her dolls as Nuns, and in sailing boats on a pond freighted with violets to represent missionaries!

A sermon she heard filled her with the desire of missionary enterprise,

but the sternly practical Rosa threw cold water on the youthful ideal, while her Confessor, Don Bassano Dedé, adopting a more sympathetic course, advised her to "talk the matter over" with Our Lord in prayer.

So Frances for a time shelved the matter of religious propaganda, and resolved to become a teacher like Rosa. As a pupil at the Sacred Heart Convent, Arlano, she did very well in her studies and gained a Higher Certificate. The death of her worthy father in February, 1870, followed by that of her pious mother in January, 1871, made it desirable for her to turn her scholastic attainments to practical account, so she went as a Supply Teacher to Vidardo in 1872, where she commenced her work by an educational tussle!

The government of Italy, especially after the fall of the Temporal Power of Pius IX in 1870, had entered upon the malign policy of de-Christianizing the people by suppressing religious instruction in the elementary schools. But the anti-clerical Mayor of the town where Frances now was, found himself up against a sort of modern Joan of Arc! Conscious of the righteousness of her cause, and supported by an enormous amount of public opinion, Frances Cabrini finished the contest in a few rounds. Not only that, but her arguments and determination even won over her antagonist, who seems to have been a man more out half-heartedly to favour a bad cause than really believing in it. He became a practical Catholic—the first conversion, perhaps, arising out of the faith and zeal of this great lover of souls.

Frances remained at Vidardo about two years. Her wish to enter the convent there came to nothing, and in 1874 she left for Cologno to assist in a Convent Orphanage under a very eccentric Superior, Antonia Tondini. It was a hard experience, but one not without its advantages, and at the end of the novitiate she had entered, she made her profession with seven other postulants before the Bishop of Lodi. Meantime, the rule of the Superior had become so "impossible" that the Bishop resolved to close the convent.

Knowing Sister Cabrini's wish for missionary work, his Lordship sent for her and said: "You wish to be a missionary—well, find a house and found a centre yourself!" Not easy advice to follow, but eventually a suitable house was discovered at Cadogna, and on November 10, 1880, Sister Cabrini and seven Sisters took possession. The work was educational and general, the motto: "I can do all things in Him who helps me" succinctly sums up the spirit of the foundation. A great development of the object in view speedily followed.

In September, 1884, a Hostel for young women studying for University degrees and professional diplomas was opened, an institute much needed to safeguard religion and moral conduct in circles too often the reverse of devout.

Sister Cabrini's next ambition was to open a House in Rome, but on consulting Cardinal Parocchi, his Eminence remarked dryly that Rome already had too many Convent Schools! But as in the case of the Mayor of Vidardo, Mother Cabrini's persistence won the day, for not only was a High School opened in the Holy City, but another one for poor children was started at Aspra, about thirteen miles from Rome.

A greater work than these, however, was now about to be undertaken. Already reports of the deplorable condition of a large part of the huge Italian population in the United States were beginning to cause much anxiety among the thoughtful, and even warning notices in the general press that something must speedily be done to ameliorate the awful state of ignorance, vice and almost savagery that was making the very name of "Italian" a byword across the Atlantic! Very few native priests were to be found among this utterly degraded and promiscuous population, while the mass of English-speaking Catholics, locally, was markedly hostile to a body of nominal co-religionists who were bringing disgrace on the name of Catholicism, and seriously jeopardizing law and good citizenship by their crimes and other disorders.

Such a terrible condition of things, of course, was not lost on the reigning Pontiff, Leo XIII, always so interested in the true welfare of the "masses" everywhere, and soon to be the author of the "Rerum Novarum"—that Magna Charta of the working man. In 1887, the Society of San Carlo—a body of zealous priests, was formed to do something to stem the tide of iniquity referred to—a tide largely the result of some generations of godless upbringing for which successive governments of the homeland must be held mainly responsible.

For some time past, Sister Cabrini had formed the resolution of initiating a missionary work for the East, but now the Bishop of Piacenza, who had heard of her project, drew her attention to the new and fearfully urgent Crusade. Her decision was soon made, and on March the Twenty-third, 1889, she, with a band of Sisters, sailed for New York to begin her last and greatest Apostolate. As so often happens, the Sign of the Cross came to test and seal the heroic work!

The zealous band of Sisters on landing, found nothing awaiting them in the way of reception, but on the contrary, apathy and even opposition. Archbishop Corrigan of New York, in fact, bluntly advised them to return home! But the great lover of souls, this true *mulier fortis*, belonged to that Old Guard of the Faith which, like its counterpart at Waterloo, "dies but does not surrender!" The field was won, and an Orphanage was opened at 59th Street, New York, and soon filled with the waifs and strays of her countrymen, while a house-to-house visitation in the Italian quarter

of the vast city brought Catholicism in action into touch with masses of people, many of whom were worse than heathens!

A glorious success soon came to mark the blessing of Heaven on the work. The Jesuit Fathers, ever generous supporters of every worthy enterprise, made over to the Sisters their fine property at Westwood Park, and before long, some three hundred children filled the school that was opened there. This foundation was followed by a Convent High School at New Grenada, placed at the disposal of Sister Cabrini by Donna Elana Arellano, a wealthy lady, and duly opened amid much general rejoicing, though some opposition was aroused by the refusal of our Saint to take illegitimate children as boarders. This was done out of no spirit of hostility to the unfortunate young people themselves, but merely as a reminder to a city, then marked by great moral laxity, to mend its ways and so raise the general standard of virtuous living.

The opening of another Convent School at New Orleans took place at a time the reverse of opportune. The murder of a police official by some Italian desperadoes had resulted in a typical Yankee outburst of violent reprisals, but the animosity against everything Italian quickly died down, and very soon the really generous-minded people came to recognize that it was largely by the spread of a truly Christian education that evil conduct was to be reformed and an improved race of citizens ensured.

It would be impossible in a short notice like this to chronicle even a tithe of the stupendous labours of this wonderful woman, whose life and achievements can only be compared with those of St Francis Xavier and St Vincent of Paul. In the space of thirty years she founded no less than sixty-seven Houses, comprising schools of all kinds, Orphanages, Hostels and several Hospitals, not only in America, but also on the continent of Europe. The House of her Congregation at Honor Oak Park, London, S.E., was honoured by a visit from her, and during the first Great War, 1914-18, a large Orphanage of the Congregation in France was turned into a hospital for the French and Allied wounded, while many of her Sisters in Rome devoted themselves to the difficult work of tracing prisoners of war and getting them into touch with their families and friends.

Those who knew the wonderful Sister best, used to say that she had in her the making of a great general or a great statesman. Her immense resolution, courage and eye to the real point of vantage in critical situations, justifies the first surmise; her profound sympathy with human nature in all its phases, and her readiness to undertake all that was calculated to establish or improve the multifarious interests of life, display the mark of true statesmanship, as history records the matter. But in all she undertook, the love of God and the salvation of His creatures was her guiding star.

Though, instant in prayer, in the Pauline phrase, she never longed for a

merely cloistered life, recognizing that the conditions of the modern world call for action sanctified by devotion and suffering. As a Superior, she wisely let those under her do their work in their own way, and in place of traditional modes of penance, advised a constant conformity to God's will in everything. No task was too great or too small for her zeal, her only fear was that her Community might lose the spirit of its first fervour!

It was at Chicago and in a Hospital of her founding, that Sister Frances Xavier Cabrini went to her reward. She had been in failing health for some time, and on December 22, 1917, she did not attend Mass. About midday she appeared so ill that both the priest and doctor were sent for. Extreme Unction was administered, but before the doctor could arrive the end had come. A somewhat sudden death, but one fully prepared for by a surpassing personal holiness, joined to apostolic achievements that stand in the front rank of all that is mentioned in the pages of hagiology of the past.

The process of her Canonization was commenced in 1928. On November the Thirteenth, 1938, the name of Frances Xavier Cabrini was inscribed among the Beatified. The requisite number of further miracles (two) having been duly authenticated, the Bull of Canonization was commanded by the Pope. The imposing ceremony took place at St Peter's, Rome, on Sunday, July 7, 1946, in the presence of some twenty Cardinals, a hundred Bishops, the Diplomatic Corps, the Apostolic Delegate to the United States, and many ecclesiastical, military and civil Americans, in addition to a vast assemblage of other persons. Sisters of the Order which St Frances Cabrini had founded, came from various countries, including a contingent from London. The Pope, Pius XII, celebrated the Mass of Canonization, with the Epistle and Gospel in Latin and Greek, signifying the universality of the Church, and at the conclusion of the ceremony crowds filled the great square of St Peter's, while a squadron of aircraft circled above in salute, as if to stress the fact that ancient devotion and modern sentiment combined to acclaim the accession of yet another Saint to a long war-torn world.

"Frances Xavier Cabrini, The Saint of the Emigrants." By a Benedictine of Stanbrook Abbey, with a Preface by the Right Reverend Abbot Smith, C.R.L., D.D.

"Saint Frances Cabrini." By Mgr. G. Della Cioppa. Translation from the Italian.

"Universe" (newspaper), Friday, July 12, 1946. Private information.



DECEMBER 31

## ST CATHERINE LABOURÉ

(1806-1876)

“The Saint of the Miraculous Medal.”

ZOE—in Religion—*Catherine* Labouré, generally known as “The Saint of the Miraculous Medal,” was born at Fain lès Moutiers in the east of France, May 2, 1806. Her family belonged to the prosperous farming class, and devotion and ability seem to have marked its members. Some of her brothers later occupied good commercial positions in Paris, and another brother became an Officer in the Army, and a Chevalier of the Legion of Honour. The elder daughter, Marie Louise, joined the Sisters of Charity of St Vincent de Paul when Zoe was twelve years of age, and her vocation very probably turned her younger sister's thoughts in the same direction.

After the death of her pious mother, Catherine and her sister Toinette went to live with their Aunt Margaret at the neighbouring village of Saint Rémy. It was there that she came under the happy influence of her cousin Claudine, a very devout girl, who not only taught her the Catechism and the higher exercises of devotion, but also assisted her in her general education and in the art of housekeeping. When she returned home after about two years, Zoe took over the management of the house, and likewise devoted much of her spare time to consoling the sick and in works of charity generally. Meanwhile she kept in touch with her sister, Marie Louise, especially in respect of the matter of her own vocation, which had now become her great object in life. She mentioned the subject to her father, who would not hear of her entering a Convent as a novice, and as a mark of his disapproval he sent his daughter to be a waitress at a restaurant owned by one of her brothers, Hubert, in Paris! But the latter's wife, a woman of great insight, soon realized that Zoe was called to the Cloister and not to cafés, and convinced by this argument, Mr Labouré rather reluctantly consented to his daughter entering the Convent of the Sisters of Charity at Châtillon in January, 1830.

The new postulant soon proved that she was a model member of the community, and in April of the same year she was transferred to the Mother House of the Congregation in the Rue de Bac, Paris. She went there at a critical time, for in July the second revolution occurred which dethroned Charles X of the elder branch of the Bourbon line, and plunged the capital into the vortex of civic upheaval with its barricades and bloodshed.

From her earliest years, Sister Catherine, as she now was, had been

remarkable for her extreme piety and love of mortification, and since childhood she had constantly invoked our Lady's aid in all her troubles and anxieties. In the Convent of the Rue de Bac she now began to have those spiritual experiences which culminated in three visions of the Holy Mother of God who, in addition to other injunctions, bade her get a medal struck with the inscription : " O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to Thee." After a long and strict inquiry into the whole matter, the wearing of this medal and the recital of the prayer were approved by Monseigneur de Quelen, Archbishop of Paris, and the cultus spread rapidly. The " Confraternity of the Children of Mary " which began in the schools of the Sisters of Charity, 1847, was approved by Pius IX, and the medal with its blue ribbon adopted as the badge. In July, 1892, Pope Leo XIII instituted a special Office and Mass of the Manifestation of the Immaculate Virgin, under the title of the " Miraculous Medal." The number of the members of the sodality then amounted to over four hundred thousand, and this has greatly increased since on the Continent, and in America, not to mention Great Britain and Ireland.

To this fresh impulse of devotion and the intense fervour it inspired, have been in part attributed the conversion of the famous Alphonse Ratisbonne (1814-1884), which event occurred after seeing, as he always solemnly declared, a vision of Our Lady in the Church of S. Andrea delle Fratte, Rome, on January 20, 1842. M. Ratisbonne was a wealthy banker in Alsace, and though nominally a member of the Jewish community, he was in fact a notorious scoffer at all religion ! No doubt the prayers and excellent example of his brother, Theodore, who became a Catholic in 1824, and later a priest, helped on this amazing and sudden change of mind and heart, which many hagiographers regard as wonderful as the conversion of St Paul. Alphonse himself was ordained to the priesthood in 1847, and he devoted the rest of his life to promulgating the Faith among the Jews and Mohammedans in Palestine, where he built two Churches and also some Orphanages for boys and girls.

In February, 1831, Sister Catherine was sent to the Hospice d' Enghien, an Institution of the Vincentian congregation for the sick and aged, and it was here that the remaining forty-six years of her remarkable life were spent. Such a work with its daily and monotonous round of labours was probably not the one that even most good persons would have chosen, but as with all the Saints, it was to Sister Catherine " God's Will " manifested by lawful authority, and that only mattered. Whatever she did, from cooking in the kitchen or tending the fowls in the farmyard, to waiting on the sick, was done with the greatest efficiency and a never-failing cheerfulness. " Her vocation," she often said, was " to serve," and unless obedience demanded it, she would never cease to be the hand-

maid rather than the mistress. In this spirit of complete devotion to all that concerned her holy vocation were the years passed.

In November, 1876, the Sister made her last annual Retreat at the Rue de Bac. But the asthma and heart trouble which had for some time afflicted her, now became so acute that she was no longer able to follow her accustomed routine, and by the beginning of December was already regarded as almost on the point of death. On the evening of 31st December, after the last Sacraments had been administered, Sister Catherine passed to her great reward surrounded by the Community reciting the prayers for the dying and the invocations of Our Lady, whose honour and intercession she had done so much to foster and extend on earth.

Catherine Laboure was declared Venerable, 1907 (Pius X), and Beatified by Pius XI, 28th May, 1938. The crowning honour of Canonization followed in July, 1947 (Pius XII). The body of the "Saint of the Miraculous Medal" fitly reposes in the Chapel of the Convent, Rue de Bac, a Sacred Shrine reminding many of the faithful to practise some part, at least, of the Science of the Saints which has such invaluable lessons for us all.

## ST JOAN OF FRANCE, FOUNDRESS OF THE ANNONCIADES (1464-1504.) Canonized May 28, 1950

WHEN *Quentin Durward* appeared in 1823, the publication may be almost described as epoch-making, for Sir Walter's vivid pen-picture of the Court and times of the sinister Machiavellian Louis XI not only created a kind of sensation in France but it gave also a great impetus to the Romantic movement, then about to eclipse, at least temporarily, the long domination of the Classical era. The many who have read this faithful account of the last days of the Middle Ages will be the better prepared to appreciate the sanctity of the wonderful woman the story of whose life, however imperfectly described here, serves as the theme of these remarks.

Jeanne de Valois, daughter of the above-mentioned King of France and his second queen consort, Margaret of Savoy, was born 23rd April, 1464. Her father, a medley of Machiavelli, Richelieu and Cromwell, had been hoping for a son, but to his great disappointment the child was a daughter and, moreover, marred by a bodily defect. The blemish seems to have been but slight—one shoulder was higher than the other—but this deformity, in conjunction with her sex, was enough to prejudice the child for life in the eyes of her ogre-like father. So the poor little princess was banished from Court and reserved as a sort of pawn to be used in one of the many future political schemes that occupied so much of the reign of the wily king. The project for the marriage of Joan to her cousin Louis, Duke of Orleans, was evolved when his exiled daughter was two-and-a-half years old, and

carried into effect when she was twelve and her husband-to-be fourteen years of age! Nothing but fear of his dread father-in-law elicited the forced "consent" of the terrified boy to this scandalous "marriage." But there was no reason why he should have behaved as he did, like a cad, to the poor child who was in the same unhappy plight as himself. Neglect, cowardly insults and other outrageous behaviour were part of the domestic martyrdom that the little duchess had to endure for years, and she accepted her lot with a holy heroism that has perfected her sanctity and won for her a place in the lot of the Saints.

Even when her partner in misfortune had in some way incurred the King's easily aroused displeasure, and he was suffering imprisonment for the same, his noble wife, forgetting all her ill-treatment, visited him in his captivity and did all she could to console him for a situation which, many will think, was a just retribution for his abominable treatment of one of whom he was so entirely unworthy.

In some mysterious way Joan of Orleans easily became convinced that she was to found one day an Order of Religious, to be largely occupied with contemplative holiness and in praying for the very many who pass their earthly existence in almost total forgetfulness of God! So, adopting the Pauline exhortation as to being "instant in prayer," Joan devoted much of her time to meditation on the sufferings of our Blessed Lord, and the steadfastness of His Holy Mother, the Queen of Sorrows. So while her husband treated her with cruel neglect and insult, and her father, in his gloomy fastness-palace of Plessis les Tours, concocted scheme after scheme for the consolidation of the centralized power of the Crown and the destruction of his enemies, this royal heroine persevered in her holy resolution for the greater glory of God and the sanctification of souls.

In 1498 the lonely and long-suffering princess found herself Queen Consort of France. In that year her husband, by the death of his cousin Charles VIII, her brother, who had succeeded to the throne in 1483, became king as Louis XII. This extraordinary person, who lives in history as "le Père du Peuple," and was actually in a way a benevolent ruler, almost immediately took steps to dissolve a marriage that was one only in name. For the canonical impediment of "Vis" or Violence had been obvious from the first, though no one, ecclesiastical or lay, had the courage to say so. So the annulment of a shameful matrimonial farce took place, though the ill-used Queen still claimed her supposed rights arising out of an accomplished fact extending over twenty years.

As some sort of compensation for her loss of the crown matrimonial, and also the many sorrows he had caused her, the King created her Duchess of Berry with all its palatine powers. This new and weighty honour, of course, involved almost undivided attention to the government of that

province. The good Duchess threw herself into this unexpected responsibility with her usual determination to do her best, and so successful was she in removing various long-established abuses and in promoting the general welfare of her subjects, that she soon came to be regarded not only as the just ruler but as the Kind Mother of her people.

We have already mentioned the resolution that this ex-Queen of France had formed to establish a Religious Order. An exalted ideal, but one which was to be severely tried. Various counsellors opposed the design as impracticable in view of the fact that the Duchess had on her hands much of the civil government of a large extent of territory. Even her Confessor, a holy Franciscan known as Father Gabriel Maria, was of the same opinion. But she who had faced far worse trials than this was not to be deterred. Father Gabriel was not only won over but he even helped her in drawing up the rules in honour of the Ten Virtues of the Blessed Virgin found in the Gospel. These were sent to Rome for approval, only to be rejected three times in succession ! But victory came at last. Cardinal Ferriera, who had been against the project, was at length convinced that the proposed Sisterhood was for God's honour and glory, and on 14th February, 1501, the Order of the Annonciade Nuns was formally authorized by the Holy See.

The leading idea of the Valiant Holy Foundress was that, as earthly queens have their maids of honour, so the Queen of Heaven should have hers. Though the Royal Duchess, owing to her cares of state, could not herself take the veil immediately, she presented the first Reverend Mother with the ring she had worn for a few months as Queen of France, and in October, 1502, the first five Sisters were professed.

The Duchess, meantime, followed the Rule—"The Ten Virtues of the Blessed Virgin," she styled these—and wore under her royal robes the hair shirt of traditional mortification and penance. Apparently she herself was professed in June, 1503, a year before her own holy death in 1504.

Some thirteen years later the Constitution of the "Annonciades" was confirmed by Leo X, who placed the Foundation under the Franciscan Order.

During the horrifying and misnamed "Wars of Religion" in France (1562-89) her tomb was broken open by the Huguenots in the hope of finding gold and jewels, but her body in its habit was all that was discovered. A dagger thrust was given to end all the stories about miracles being worked through her intercession, but though so long a period had elapsed, blood flowed out, which is stated to have caused some wonderful cures.

By the middle of the eighteenth century the Annonciades possessed nearly fifty convents in France and Belgium. Dispersed by the Revolution, the Order was allowed to reform by Napoleon on condition of taking up teaching, and for almost a century the schools of these nuns were among

the best in France. Again suppressed by the "Separation of Church and State" legislation of M. Combes and his anti-Christian party, during 1903-5, some of the Sisters—those of the Convent in the upper town of Boulogne—came to England—that ever-generous place of refuge to so many in trouble—and opened a small house at St Margarets-at-Cliffe, Dover, 1903. Here the contemplative life which formed the original Rule, has since been resumed and carried out with all its pristine fervour. The number of Houses of the Order now in existence is under a dozen.

The life of St Joan of France is perhaps unique in the annals of hagiography. Born in the purple, and yet subject from her earliest years to vicissitudes that would have appeared formidable even to an anchorite accustomed to poverty, hardship and self-enforced austerity, she literally put the splendour of the world on one side to embrace inwardly a life of the acutest suffering, and that too in an exalted sphere which might otherwise have caused her to be the most envied of her sex and age.

Beatified by Benedict XIV, her feast day was kept on 4th February, and it became the custom to refer to her as a "Saint," though the actual canonization by the present Pius XII did not take place till Whit Sunday, 28th May, 1950. Such an event of historical and liturgical interest caused tens of thousands of her compatriots to file through St Peter's, all eager to acclaim yet another great servant of God who had proved *semper fidelis*, and that, too, not in times of serenity but *per tot discrimina rerum*!

N.B.—Connected with St Joan's Foundation is a Third Order for lay persons known as the "Order of Peace." No "Habit" is prescribed, but members are enjoined to recite the Rosary called "The Triple Crown of the Blessed Virgin Mary." Peace on earth, the practice of the Christian Virtues and the observance of the laws of the Church, are the chief objects of meditation and devotion.

## ST ELIZABETH BICHIER DES AGES, FIRST SUPERIOR OF THE SISTERS OF ST ANDREW

(1773-1838.) Canonized July 6, 1947

ST ELIZABETH BICHIER is one of that active section of canonized persons who did so much for the restoration of religion during the years that followed the great Revolution in France. Her family belonged to the provincial noblesse which formed the backbone of French society under the *Ancien Régime*. For these country nobles lived, for the most part, on their estates, and among their own people, and it was this honourable class that supplied so many brave officers of the army and navy, learned lawyers and upright civil officials to the nation, thus forming a strong and pleasing contrast to

the titled self-seekers who crowded around the Court of Versailles and who too often led useless lives of extravagance and luxury, which have brought so much undeserved odium on the ancient aristocracy of France.

The Sieur Anthony Bichier and Marie Augier de Moussac were the parents of the remarkable woman whose life-story is told, however briefly and imperfectly, in these pages. Her childhood, though amiable and good, does not seem to have been in any way remarkable. At the age of ten years she went to the Convent at Poitiers, where she was very happy, and to which she owed an excellent education. At the age of seventeen she returned home and, as Mlle Elizabeth Bichier des Ages, took her place in the local society.

Then came two calamities. The first was the death of her good father; the other was the storm of the Revolution destined to overturn the altar and the throne. The anarchy which now swept over a large part of the country was the signal for the emigration of many of the noblesse and other persons of property, and among the large number who adopted a course that deprived the Royal government of those who might have rallied round the Crown and have been a support of order, was Elizabeth's elder brother. He apparently went to the Royalist centre at Coblenz, where the Comte d'Artois, brother of Louis XVI, and later to be Charles X, was forming an army with the aid of Prussia and Austria for the purpose of crushing the hydra of revolution. Be this as it may, his sister was left alone—just when she needed his help and protection most—to look after the mother of them both, who was seriously ill, and also to manage the considerable family property as best she could. But our brave young lady, who had much of the courage of her great countrywoman, St Joan of Arc, rose nobly to the occasion, even taking lessons in accountancy and property law to help her in her task. She displayed so much spirit and competence that even the newly established Republican officials respected her, and the ancestral domain escaped the confiscation which was the penalty of emigration and other acts regarded as hostile to the existing order, or disorder, of things.

After a time, Madame, or as she was now styled "Citoyenne," Bichier and her daughter went to live on a much smaller property at La Guimetière, near Poitou, but here a fresh difficulty presented itself. The law of the "Civil Constitution of the Clergy," cutting off the Church of France from union with the Holy See, was now in force, and a "constitutional" priest had been intruded into the parish. But our heroine, nothing daunted, resolved, like the bulk of the people, not to attend the schismatical services in the parish church, and arrangements were made for prayers to be said secretly in a barn several times a week after nightfall. For her own perfection in spiritual matters, she had adopted a kind of "Rule" which comprised stated prayers and meditation daily, the visitation of the sick and afflicted, and the instruction of the young in the catechism. This last was a most

important consideration, for religion had been officially abolished in France, and the new "Age of Reason" threatened to bring about a generation completely heathen.

It was during this period of menace and positive danger that Elizabeth Bichier made the acquaintance of the Abbé André Fournet, a zealous priest who was doing much the same kind of perilous "underground" work to preserve the remnants of the Faith at Maille, as was being pursued at La Guimetière. When the "Directoire" government succeeded the nightmare of the Reign of Terror, and things had somewhat improved as far as religion was concerned, the Abbé became convinced that a widespread organized effort was called for "to rebuild the ruins and remedy the ignorance" that had been the bitter fruit of the "trees of liberty" planted in and after 1789.

A few years later the rise of Napoleon and the establishment of the Concordat afforded the great opportunity for the realization of the Abbé Fournet's design. A number of cloistered institutions were being set up in various parts of France, and among these was a community of pious women "to teach girls and attend the sick," which the Abbé Fournet had founded at La Guimetière. He was anxious to entrust this new local revival of religious life under Rule to Elizabeth Bichier, whose courage, practical experience of affairs and, above all, conspicuous and solid piety all combined to mark her out as singularly suited for the work in view.

Elizabeth was free to accept the position, as her mother was now dead; and so, after a short noviciate first at the Carmelite Convent at Poitiers, recently reopened, and then in another Congregation of Religious known as the "Society of Providence," she found herself Superior of the Convent at La Guimetière which her friend the Abbé Fournet had, as stated above, opened for his special work of education and charity. The beginnings were so successful that in 1806 a larger house, the Château de Molanté in the district, had to be acquired. This again proved inadequate, and so other and more extensive premises were purchased at Maille.

In 1816 the Rule obtained confirmation from the Bishop of Poitiers as that of "The Daughters of the Holy Cross," but as this designation resembled very closely the title also of the famous Congregation founded by the Ven. Marie Therese Haze (1782-1876), Mother Bichier always referred to her Community as the "Sisters of St Andrew," probably because Andrew was the patron saint of the Abbé Fournet, to whom under God she and her co-religious owed so much.

After the restoration of Louis XVIII, who was very friendly to the foundation and its good work, a noviciate was opened at Issy, chiefly through the advice, it seems, of the Marquise de Croisy. Some convents were established in Paris itself, but these apparent "signs of progress" soon



became the cause of a dispute which might have proved fatal to the very existence of the Congregation. The Archbishop of Paris, Cardinal Alexander Talleyrand-Perigord, the aged uncle of Napoleon's mighty minister under the Empire, wanted the houses in Paris and at Issy to be withdrawn from the jurisdiction of the Mother House, and the proposal had the support of the Bishop of Poitiers and even of the Abbé Moussac, the maternal uncle of Mother Elizabeth herself. But the latter saw that such a division would introduce a dual government and be also a practical denial of the truth of the Gospel proverb "No man can serve two masters!" So, in spite of the strong odds against her, she held out for the original unity of supreme authority, and won the day.

This unpleasant episode did no permanent harm. On the contrary, it proved the beginning of much real good. By 1830 the Congregation had some sixty houses spread over Europe; and now its convents are found also in many parts of North and South America and in China. This development has been ever inspired by the wonderful spirit which the holy Foundress left as a precious legacy of wise guidance to her sisters in religion. To never-failing piety and a devotion to duty that seemed impervious to opposition she joined a constant perseverance that made everything she undertook almost a certainty as to its success. She never allowed trials or misfortunes to mar the sweetness and sympathy which made her rule so pleasant and the approach to her so easy.

Her holy death occurred at the Noviciate House, Paris, 26th August, 1838, but it was not until 1934 that she was Beatified by Pius XI, the year before the Canonization of St John Fisher and St Thomas More. Her own enrolment in the Calendar of the Church came on 6th July, 1947 (Pius XII), and she is now honoured throughout the world as yet another protagonist of those Christian schools and scholars that are so gravely menaced in many regions at this present time.

## BLESSED VINCENT MARY PALLOTTI, FOUNDER OF THE "PIOUS SOCIETY OF MISSIONS"

(1798-1850.) Beatified June, 1950

THE missionary spirit which was stressed by our Saviour in His last charge to the Apostles—"Go ye and teach all nations"—must always in some form influence the life of everyone who aspires to be really devout, and by example at least, to help others to be so too. The Blessed Vincent Pallotti, whose name is associated with the sanctification of souls everywhere, was related to two noble families, the Pallotti of Norcia and the de Rossi of Rome.

Count Pelligrino de Rossi, Pius IX's famous Prime Minister, who was assassinated by some of the Mazzini revolutionaries in the upheaval of 1848,

was a member of the last-named stock. The future founder of the "Pious Society of Missions" was an alumnus of the Roman College, where he so distinguished himself in Theology as to be deemed worthy of the doctorate at the early age of twenty-three, a few months after his ordination. A distinguished career in the Curia seemed indicated, but, following the precedent of Philip Neri, mundane honours were set aside to minister to the poor and neglected to be found even under the shadow of St Peter's—a constant recalling of the divine reminder—"for the poor you have always with you" (*St John XII. 8*).

The young priest's self-imposed labour brought him into contact with poverty, sickness and wantonness in all the phases, even with personal danger of a very serious kind, for on more than one occasion violent unbelievers whom he sought to benefit, either spiritually or temporally, threatened to kill him. A notorious instance of this peril was successfully met by this indomitable missionary who, in the disguise of an old woman, boldly visited a sick and fully armed anti-clerical who had sworn to kill any priest who dared to approach him. Father Pallotti took the risk, and his courage so impressed the dying man that sweet reason, and not fury, marked the unexpected interview. A quiet talk took place, resulting in confession and Holy Communion as preparation for a happy death.

This striking experience of the ignorance and sin that can exist and even flourish in the midst of fine churches, good schools and all the resources of well-established religion, convinced Father Pallotti that yet another organization specially trained to grapple with the evil was urgently needed. It was this that caused him to set on foot in 1835 the now long-famous "Pious Society of Missions," which, with the whole world for its parish, aims at making the teaching of the Church known to Catholics and non-Catholics alike, chiefly with respect to those bands of emigrants who in far-off lands find themselves without priests, chapels and schools. Such a state of things, and the terrible evils which came from it, became glaringly manifest in the United States nearly half a century later, chiefly among the poorer class of Italian settlers, and it was the stupendous labours of that heroic woman St Frances Xavier Cabrini that largely brought about the longed-for reformation.

Much of what was done across the Atlantic has been achieved also in Europe and elsewhere by the "Pious Society," which from its beginning was regarded as supplying an enormous "want." Approved by Pope Gregory XVI in the very year of its inception, and with a membership swelled by cardinals, bishops, priests, noblemen, professors, etc., its future success appeared almost assured.

The Rule, which was much influenced by that of St Francis, was confirmed by Pius IX in 1846, and a later and revised one by Pius X in

November, 1909. The Fathers of the famous Congregation came to England in 1844, and a beginning was made at Hatton Garden, London, already the centre of a large Italian colony. Father Fa di Bruno, of a noble family in Italy, and Father Raphael Melia were the zealous pioneers of the new foundation. Not only was the fine, colourful church opened in 1863, but Father di Bruno also wrote an excellent apologetical treatise, "Catholic Belief," affording a popular account of the Church and her teaching, which has done very much to clear up misconceptions and state facts as they are.

An important part of the pastoral work of the "Association" consists in the giving of Missions and Retreats, both having for object the stimulating of the faithful in the practice of their religion, and in instructing genuine inquirers in the doctrines and devotions of Catholicism.

Apart from the pastoral labours associated with his life, Father Pallotti himself was remarkable for his great personal sanctity. All he did in word or in work bore the stamp of holiness. His affability disarmed hostility and inspired confidence, while his practical charity to all in need resembled that of St Martin of Tours in that it often involved the giving away of some of his own clothes to relieve this or that hard case. Leo XIII, who, as Archbishop of Perugia, knew him well, used to speak of this great labourer in the Lord's vineyard as one "likely to be raised one day to the altars of the Church."

The founder of the universal crusade of instruction and conversion passed from the world he had done so much to inform and edify on 22nd June, 1850. His obsequies in the Church of San Salvatore in Onda partook of a spontaneous demonstration of love, admiration and devotion, and the volume of the reaction then elicited has increased ever since. Father Pallotti was beatified in January, 1950, and his name, like those of St Francis Xavier, St Paul of the Cross and St Alphonsus Liguori, will continue to be invoked as a patron of that teaching of "all nations" which was Our Lord's last command to the Church.

ST ANTONIO JUAN CLARET, BISHOP AND CONFESSOR:  
FOUNDER OF THE CONGREGATION OF THE "MISSIONARY SONS OF THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY"

(1807-1870.) Canonized May 7, 1950

THE exigencies engendered by two world wars have brought into prominence the subject of the "late vocation" to the priesthood, of which the apostles were the first and greatest examples. St Antonio Claret is certainly another instance of the kind in modern times, for he was twenty years of

age before he experienced the great call to the altar. Born on Christmas Eve, 1807, at Sallent, in Catalonia, he was the third son and fifth child of Juan Claret and Joseph Clara his wife. Even as a child he had a great pity for the poor and suffering, and to a natural piety was added, as in the boy Nelson, a very courageous spirit.

When he was only five years old he fearlessly stayed behind to guide his blind and aged grandfather to a place of safety while the French soldiers were searching the place for some guerillas who had shot several of their companions a few days before. The Peninsula War had now begun, and such incidents usually meant severe military reprisals, in which neither age nor rank was spared.

For generations the Claret family had followed the trade of weaving and had acquired a widespread reputation for their excellent textile productions. As a preliminary to pursuing the ancestral business, Antonio went to the parish school, where he soon became the best pupil. The master, Don Pascal, a priest, was a great believer in a verbal knowledge of the catechism, and in after life his promising pupil used to say how thankful he was for this mode of religious instruction, since most popular discourses derive their chief efficacy through reviving in the minds of the congregation the catechetical knowledge of former days.

When Antonio was ten he made his first communion, and the fervour he displayed on this occasion, joined to his general religious demeanour, caused one of the assistant priests at the church to advise his going to a high school in order to learn Latin, as a vocation to the priesthood seemed to be indicated. So for a year the language of Imperial Rome and of the Church was studied, but some business difficulties which, about this time, occurred at home made it desirable that Antonio should take up a course of higher instruction in the theory and practice of the weaver's art, so for this purpose he went to Barcelona, the Liverpool of Spain. For three years he learned all that was to be taught there on the subject, but an escape from drowning, which he attributed—like the young St Thomas of Canterbury seven centuries before—to the protection of the Blessed Virgin, turned his mind to a religious life. Though he assisted his father in the family pursuit for the next few years, he resumed his Latin reading under Don Francisco Mas-y-Artigas, but at this time the Carthusian Order, and not the secular priesthood, was uppermost in his mind. He practised daily the traditional austerities of the spiritual sons of St Bruno, whose picture he nailed to the wall of his room, which was arranged after the manner of a monastic cell.

This kind of life lasted till 1829. In that year Don Pablo de Corcuera, Bishop of Vich, was anxious to increase the number of his secular clergy, and having learnt of the very holy life of the son of the master weaver of Sallent, he invited this promising subject to have an interview with him.

Though Antonio made no secret of his desire to be a Carthusian, it was finally arranged that he was to give the secular vocation serious consideration first. The advice was excellent, for before long Antonio became convinced that parochial life and not the cloister was to be his calling.

During the years of preparation at the Seminary, he studied with unflagging diligence not only the prescribed professional books on dogmatic and moral theology but also the scriptures and the lives of the Saints, and not a few of the Fathers of the Church. His meditations were chiefly on the angels and their influence on the lives and activities of mankind. It was during this period that he formed a lasting friendship with one of the students, Jaime Luciano Balmes, later to be very famous as an historian and philosopher. It was this gifted young ecclesiastic who some years before his early death (1848) urged the marriage of the young Queen Isabella to her cousin Don Carlos, the Spanish "Pretender," a match which would have ended the rivalry between the two royal houses and saved the country from the years of civil war and other evils that were the result of ignoring this wise policy.

Antonio Claret was raised to the priesthood on 13th June, 1835. The time was a momentous one, for Spain was now in the throes of internecine conflict between the party of the Queen-Mother, Christina, Regent of the infant Queen Isabella, and the supporters of her brother-in-law, Don Carlos. The abrogation of the age-long Salic Law, forbidding female succession to the throne, by his brother, the late King Ferdinand VII, in favour of his little daughter Isabella had kindled the flame. The clergy, nobility and most persons of property, both gentle and simple, supported the Don, for they realized that his opponents were chiefly from among the revolutionary and anti-Christian sections of the country. Their fears were soon justified! The Seven Years Civil War that followed (1833-40) was marked by the destruction or seizure of very much Church and lay property, and the expulsion of the Religious Orders, not to mention massacres and private assassinations that recalled the Jacobin horrors in France, 1793-4.

Not every part of the country, however, was equally affected. The east suffered much less than the west and north, so Don Antonio Claret, who had gone back to Sallent after his ordination, was able to pursue the usual work of a parish priest there for some years. Like his contemporary, the St Curé d'Ars, he spent hours in the Confessional, and very soon his discourses, redolent, needless to add, with passages from his beloved Catechism, reinforced by illustrations and instructions of his own, caused the church to be crowded several times a week. Very many came from afar to lay the troubles of mind, and often of body also, before him, and to each complaint he gave that wonderful personal attention which made every applicant

imagine that his or her case in point was the only one to which the good Father had to attend.

Though Don Antonio did all he could to keep clear of the political turmoils which were the unhappy lot of his country for so many years, he could not remain entirely silent when outrages worthy of fiends became, as they often did, the order, or rather disorder, of the day. To the earliest troubles were later added those that arose over the unpopular marriage of the young Queen Isabella with her cousin Prince Francisco D'Assisi. The match, which had been arranged by Louis Philippe of France, presumably for his own ends, caused fresh commotions in Spain, and Don Antonio, who was known not to favour the "liberal" policy which had supported the royal union, was advised to leave Catalonia for a time. He spent two years in the Canary Isles, a happy exile in a region free from the almost interminable strifes of the old country. Most of his leisure was devoted to writing books on doctrine and apologetics for the "Libreria Religiosa," a kind of "Catholic Truth Society" he had founded at Vich, and also in outlining the Rules of a Congregation he hoped to establish one day for the evangelization of heathens and unbelievers at home and abroad.

After about fourteen months Don Antonio returned to Spain in May, 1849. In July of that year a meeting was held in the diocesan Seminary at Vich and the constitution of the "Missionary Sons of the Immaculate Heart of Mary," also known as the "Claretian Fathers" (C.M.F.), was drawn up. This important achievement had scarcely been concluded when news arrived that its originator had been nominated by Queen Isabella as Archbishop of Santiago in Cuba.

The consecration of the new Archbishop took place at Vich with much ceremony and rejoicing on 6th October, 1850, and a week later he received the Pallium from the Papal Nuncio, Archbishop Brunnelli.

The Archbishop of Santiago was also honoured by the Queen with the Cross of Isabella the Catholic. After some weeks' delay and a rather protracted voyage, he reached Santiago, Cuba, on 15th February, 1851. No Archbishop had resided there for fourteen years, and the whole island was in a by no means satisfactory condition. Parishes were far apart, the number of clergy inadequate, and the people outside the towns badly instructed. The usual scandals abounded, the difficulties being also complicated by the prevailing existence of slavery. The Archbishop began an immediate and thorough visitation and, in spite of primitive modes of travel and transport, most parishes were visited and many of the grosser abuses reformed.

One of the first improvements was the reorganization of the Seminary at Santiago itself. That institution had become in great part a lay college, but was again restored almost entirely to its original purpose of educating and training ecclesiastical students.

In another direction, a school of agriculture and many local banks owed their initiation to the very progressive Archbishop, who also laboured to bring back many of the former happier conditions of the sugar plantations—amenities which had largely died out, owing to the migration of many of the landowners to the towns.

A deeply rooted evil, caused by the great obstacles thrown in the way of marriages between whites and blacks, had long fomented a violent controversy, and the Archbishop, who upheld the right of "free choice" sanctioned by age-long Catholic tradition, incurred such odium from the opposition that an attempt was even made to assassinate him ! He escaped with a very serious wound, which at least had the effect of turning public opinion in his favour, and of preparing the way for a reasonable solution of the embittered problem. As the Archbishop had been unexpectedly sent to Cuba, so he was as unexpectedly recalled to become Confessor to the Queen. He consented only on condition that he was not to live at the palace, nor attend the royal functions, but be left free for general pastoral work elsewhere. He was later translated from the See of Santiago to the Archbishopric of *Trajanopolis in Partibus*.

As in Cuba, the Royal Confessor found many new difficulties at the Escorial. The young Queen was generous and responsive, but pleasure-loving and impulsive, and, moreover, her "arranged" marriage had not been a success. She had sought "consolation" in another and unworthy way, and her court eagerly followed suit by every kind of worldliness and worse ! The tact, practical commonsense and the holiness of life of the Archbishop, and his wonderful example and ministrations, soon worked a happy change for the better, which had also beneficial effects elsewhere. During the royal progresses he absented himself from the ceremonial receptions and functions, in order to preach in the local churches, visit the hospitals and the afflicted, so as to be ever "on his Master's business."

When the Revolution, which had long been prepared by the secret societies and malcontents of the country, succeeded in dethroning the Queen and replacing her government by the "Republic" which has so malign a memory in history, the Archbishop retired to France. He continued in Paris his apostolic labours among the Spanish colony there. Summoned to Rome for the Vatican Council of 1869-70, he spoke with much effect in favour of the dogma of papal infallibility, which greatly impressed, among others, Archbishop (later Cardinal) Manning, who exclaimed, "You Spanish Bishops are the Imperial Guard of the Roman Pontiffs. Once you start to fight, nothing can resist you !"

After the definition, Archbishop Claret returned to the Cistercian monastery of Fontfroide, France. His health, which had long been failing, now became rapidly worse. At the beginning of October, 1870, he was a

dying man, yet one in possession of all his faculties, for when he heard the monks reciting the daily Office he frequently continued where they had left off. Early in the morning of 24th October, the Feast of St Raphael, this great apostle of the Spanish people and many others, fortified by the last holy rites, passed to his reward.

In 1899, two years after his remains had been translated to the Mother house of his Congregation at Vich, Barcelona, the holy Archbishop was declared Venerable by Leo XIII. Beatified by Pius XI on 25th February, 1934, the Canonization followed on Sunday, 7th May, 1950, during the present pontificate (Pius XII).

St Antonio Claret used to describe those outstanding impulses to do good which he received as his "Assignments." Such indications come in various forms to very many, and happy are they who make the response to the calls of grace. Almost his whole life, in the old world and the new, had been marked by vast labours for the salvation of souls by word, by example and by the pen. His spirit is being reflected to-day in the great Missionary Congregation which he called into being "to preach Jesus Christ and Him crucified."

As in the case of not a few of God's champions, he did not live to see the success of many of his undertakings. Opposition, amounting to positive persecution, and calumnies which pursued him even to the grave were his lot, so that on his very death-bed he could repeat the famous words of the great Pope Gregory VII: "I have loved justice and hated iniquity, therefore I die in exile." Yet as the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church, so the work of those who sow in tears is often reaped in gladness in other and happier times.

[*The Assignment of Antonio Claret.* By Daniel Sargent. (The Declan X. McMullen Company, Inc., New York.)]

## ST JOSEPH CAFASSO, CONFESSOR

(1811-1860.) Canonized June 23, 1947

LIKE many who have made, for good or evil, their mark on the world, Joseph Cafasso came of a middle-class stock. His parents, John Cafasso and Ursula Beltramo, were highly respected citizens of Castelnovo d'Asti, Piedmont. Their four children received a superior education, the subject of this notice, Joseph, doing so well at his school as to be regarded as its most promising pupil. He was much liked also by his classmates, whom he would help in the matter of themes and exercises, for, like Chaucer's famed Clerk of Oxenford, "gladly would he learn and gladly teach!"

After a short time at the High School of Chieri, young Cafasso, who



had realized the beginning of a vocation to the priesthood, entered the Seminary of the place, then recently opened by the Archbishop of Turin. As before, he shone in the several branches of learning, and so much so that by special dispensation he was ordained priest at the early age of twenty-two years and a few months (1833).

A student by nature, the young Abbate Cafasso now entered the Institute of St Francis in the same town, a college under the direction of the Don Luigi Guala. He specialized in Moral Theology, and with such success that the Rector asked him to take over the lectures on that subject. Cafasso did so, and very soon the more serious section of the town was talking of the young professor who had infused life, energy and interest into a branch of Sacred learning marked more by the sign of the jejune than the inspiring.

In the intervals of imparting the traditional Catholic ethical principles to his many and almost enthusiastic students, Don Cafasso did not forget that a priest must also bear in mind the proverb "*Salus populi suprema lex.*" Ever a man of prayer and deeply concerned for the one thing that matters both for time and eternity, the young Seminary professor gave frequent courses of sermons on the eternal truths to crowded congregations, and, like his great contemporary, the St Curé d'Ars, he spent many hours in the confessional. "When we hear confessions," he used to say, "Our Lord wants us to be loving and pitiful, to be fatherly towards all who come to us, without reference to the matter, who they are, or what they have done."

His labours in the pulpit and in the holy tribunal did much to dispel the last remains of Jansenism, which so long had been the creeping paralysis of Catholicism in the North of Italy and elsewhere.

After the death of the excellent Don Guala in 1848, Don Cafasso found his sphere of usefulness much increased, for in addition to his work of lecturing and training the ecclesiastical students at St Francis' Institute, he had now to administer a religious centre known as "The Sanctuary of St Ignatius," which, since the suppression of the Jesuits (July, 1773), had come into the possession of the Archbishops of Turin. The place seems to have been used for the reception of pilgrims and for the giving of Retreats for clergy and lay folk, and as if this new and exacting duty was not enough, our indefatigable rector now added to it much work among the convicts in the several prisons of Turin. Those sentenced to death were his special care, and of the many who were instructed and consoled by him in their last hours was General Jerome Romorino, a veteran of Napoleon's army, who, after a chequered career as a soldier of fortune, was shot in pursuance of a sentence of a court martial, for, apparently, flagrant disobedience to orders, which was held by the court to have contributed to the defeat of Charles Albert by the Austrians at Novara, May, 1849.

Four years after the birth of the subject of this notice, a child was born in the same little town of Castelnuovo, who, like Cafasso, was destined to do a great work for souls. This was Don John Bosco, founder of the Salesian Congregation, whose work in every branch of education may almost be said to have achieved a revolution in the whole curriculum of social science.

It was in the church of the Institute of which Don Cafasso was Rector that Don Bosco said his first Mass (Trinity Sunday, 1841), and from this time onward the two became fast friends. It was, in fact, Don Cafasso who saved the wonderful Social Worker for the mighty undertaking that has made him famous throughout the world. For, like St Philip Neri, Don Bosco had wished to devote his life to the foreign missions, but now he happily harkened to the solemn warning of his master and friend: "Carry on with your work for the boys—that and nothing else is God's will for you!" Other foundations for the spiritual and temporal welfare of the masses, such as those of Peter Merla for juvenile offenders and the charitable institutions of the Marchioness Falletti di Barolo, to mention but two, also found in Don Cafasso a generous and constant friend.

This great lover of Our Lord and the souls He has redeemed seems to have had a premonition that his own life would terminate in 1860. He followed in his own instance the same course of preparation for death he had ever prescribed to so many others, taking care to dispose of whatever property he had and to concentrate his thoughts, as far as possible, on the things of eternity.

Among his bequests were a sum of money and the gift of a piece of land to his friend Don Bosco, who was thus enabled to enlarge the Salesian Church at Turin. True to his priestly vocation to the last, Don Cafasso continued to say Mass and hear confessions until the pneumonia which had seized him rendered any further efforts of the kind impossible. On the morning of Saturday, 23rd June, 1860, after having received with his habitual devotion the last Rites of the Church, this Apostle of his people passed to his eternal reward amidst the tears and benedictions of crowds of his fellow citizens, who already spoke of him as "Il Santo!" Such a title, inspired by affection and admiration, forestalled the judgement of the Church pronounced sixty-seven years later, when Pius XII, in the presence of one of those immense multitudes of the Faithful that throng St Peter's on these occasions, enrolled the Blessed Joseph Cafasso among the Saints of the Calendar (23rd June, 1947).

In him, and for all time, generations of Christian workers will find not only a powerful advocate ever ready to assist them by his prayers, but also a shining example of rare and precious talents not often exemplified in one person. For St Joseph Cafasso, as a teacher of Moral Theology, rivalled

St Alphonsus; as a practical pastor of souls, St Charles Borromeo; and as a constant organizer of Missions and Retreats for the Sanctification of clergy and people alike, that other holy and zealous countryman of his, Canon St John Baptist de Rossi.

## ST MARIA GORETTI, MARTYR OF CHASTITY

(1890-1902.) Canonized June 24, 1950

CHRISTIAN doctrine has ever classed chastity as a most admirable virtue, since the practice of it makes us more like angels than the fallen children of Adam. It was for this great gift that the Blessed Virgin was chosen to be the Mother of God, and St John to be the "Beloved Disciple." Hence the earnest exhortation of St Paul: "Fornication and all uncleanness, let it not be named among you as becometh saints." (*Ephesians* v. 3).

It is therefore not surprising that many of those honoured in the Calendar of the Church allowed themselves to suffer death, and even most painful deaths, rather than submit to being defiled. St Ursula and her virginal band of companions in martyrdom (date uncertain) are, traditionally at least, believed to have suffered in this holy cause. Another and quite modern instance of the same kind of constancy is now to be recorded.

Maria Goretti was born on 16th October, 1890, at Corinaldo in the Marches of Ancona, Italy. Her parents, Luigi Goretti and Assunta Carline (Caroline ?) his wife, were of peasant stock, and though humble, and even illiterate, were much respected as a most amiable and edifying pair. They worked hard daily in the fields, went to the sacraments frequently and brought up their seven children in the usual practices of piety.

Maria, the subject of these remarks, was the second daughter, and, like her sister and two brothers, she played her part in the domestic occupations of the household. As the country was very poor and the land almost unremunerative, the Gorettis left the district and finally settled at Ferriere de Conca, not far from Nettuno, a seaside town some thirty miles west of Rome. To lessen the expense of living, Luigi Goretti arranged to share the house with a neighbour and his son, Giovanni and Alessandro Serenelli, labourers like himself.

Though compulsory education had long been in force in Italy, it does not appear that little Maria ever went to school. Owing to remoteness of place and other difficulties, the law was often practically inoperative in many localities. But though unlettered, the child was well informed, in a popular way, as to her holy religion, both from the instructions in the parish church and what she learnt from her good parents. She early acquired a tender

devotion to Our Lord and His Blessed Mother, to keep the commandments, and to hate everything that partook of the nature of sin.

On 6th May, 1900, she experienced her first great sorrow in the death of her dear father. Though so young, she had for some time been, as remarked, doing much of the housework, but from now she redoubled her efforts, the more to help her widowed mother upon whom so many new responsibilities had fallen.

First Communion in those days and until the accession of Pius X in August, 1903, was usually deferred till rather later than is now the custom, and it was not until the Feast of Corpus Christi, 1901, that Maria made hers in the Church of Ferriere. The devotion with which she received this great sacrament that marks a spiritual milestone in Catholic life, made a deep impression on all who were present, and her edifying demeanour was afterwards often cited as an example to be followed. She was already looked upon by all as a remarkably holy child—a "little Madonna," in whose face goodness seemed to be reflected.

The presence of the before-mentioned Giovanni Serenelli and his son Alessandro as part occupants of the house had proved to be a great mistake. For as time went on the pair more and more showed the evil that was in them. The father was in frequent trouble with the police for drunkenness, while the son, a loutish youth, evinced a thoroughly bad mind and one sedulously fed on newspaper reports of murders and sex crimes. The fact that the Gorettis had lost their father and chief protector, of course, increased the danger, which now speedily manifested itself. When Maria was in her twelfth year Alessandro began to pester her with his hateful "attentions," which, needless to add, were thoroughly repulsive to the object of them. So far from being even normally friendly with him, she avoided his utterly undesirable company as much as possible. Maddened at length by her undisguised hostility, Alessandro now proceeded to acts that brought him well within the reach of the criminal law. About ten days before the commission of his final and crowning crime, he made an attempt to assault her. The little girl resisted with the strange strength that grace so often imparts to menaced virtue, and so her assailant had to desist, but not before he had threatened her with death if she dared to denounce him! Then on 5th July the fatal climax came.

Under the pretence of getting her to do some mending for him, he dragged her into a room and repeated his infamous attempt. Baffled again by her last desperate resistance, and realizing that severe punishment now awaited him, her assailant stabbed his little victim several times with a knife and left her mortally wounded. She had enough strength to give the alarm; the police arrived and her murderer was taken into custody. It was with much difficulty that the youth was saved from being lynched by the

infuriated crowd, whose anger was but the prelude to the indignation aroused by the crime, which spread over Italy and indeed the world within the next few days. His trial before the High Court at Rome resulted in a sentence of thirty years imprisonment with hard labour, the death penalty having been abolished in Italy in 1888.

Maria was removed in a dying state to the hospital at Nettuno, where everything was done for her, but from the first her case was regarded as hopeless. The last rites were administered, and after hours of great suffering the little martyr to the great virtue passed to her eternal reward.

Her last words were words of forgiveness of him who was the cause of this awful yet glorious tragedy, which so deeply stirred the whole world and made the future canonization almost a certainty. Maria Goretti was declared Blessed on 27th April, 1947, and three years later, on Saturday, 24th June, 1950, the final act that enrolled her name among the Saints took place amidst scenes of almost unsurpassed enthusiasm. The event was the first of the kind to be celebrated entirely outside St Peter's, *i.e.* in the square before the vast Basilica. Among the thronging crowds of Holy Year Pilgrims and the citizens of Rome there were present—in addition to the papal curie and persons of distinction of every nation—the aged mother and the brothers and sisters of the Saint.

At the conclusion of the moving ceremony Pope Pius XII implored “the divine protection for young people against the contamination and other dangers to which they are exposed.” His Holiness exhorted “parents and guardians” to protect the innocence of children under their care, and to keep them from places where impiety and perversion reign, as did the mother of Maria Goretti. The sacred remains of the Child Martyr for Purity now repose in the parish church of Nettuno, where an ornate shrine is being prepared for their permanent reception.

Catholic piety and tradition ascribes more or less numerous spiritual favours to the intercession of each canonized Saint. Perhaps the most noteworthy of those attributed to the prayers of the Child Martyr of Nettuno is the conversion of him who was the means of her losing her life here that she might find it in a joyful eternity. For years after his conviction Alessandro Serenelli remained obdurate, but at length the hour of grace and repentance struck. “It began,” he said, “with a mysterious and surprising dream. I thought I was in a garden full of flowers, and the whitest lilies. There I saw Maria Goretti . . . she offered them to me saying ‘Take them.’ With the gift came the new life of peace with God.”

After his release, he sought out the mother of the family he had so grievously wronged, and with tears implored her pardon. The favour was immediately granted, and confirmed the following morning by a joint reception of holy communion in the parish church. This almost central

character in the moving drama of Nettuno still lives in strict retirement, a lasting and present witness to the triumph of faith and the Christian charity that never fails.

[(1) *Blessed Maria Goretti, Martyr for Purity*. By John Carr. C.S.S.R. (2) *The Universe*. (3) *Catholic Times*. (4) Private information.]

## BLESSED MARGARET BOURGEOYS, FOUNDRESS OF THE CONGREGATION DE NOTRE DAME DE MONTREAL

(1620-1700.) Beatified November 12, 1950

OF the five Congregations of Sisters of Notre Dame—all devoted to the instruction of the young—the first, that of Montreal, owes its foundation to a remarkable woman, Margaret Bourgeoys, who may be almost called the pioneer of Religious life in North America. Born at Troyes, France, 17th April, 1620, the third child of Abraham Bourgeoys and Guillemette Garnier, his wife, she grew up rather with a reputation for a fondness for fine clothes and the normal social amusements of the time, than any sign of a religious vocation, though, of course, she was sincerely devout, and an influence for good in her circle. A call to dedicate her life to the Christian education of Youth is said to have come to her during a public procession at Troyes in honour of Our Blessed Lady in which she was taking part, in the course of 1643. Her efforts to join the Carmelites and later the Poor Clares, were not successful, and hence her resolution to establish a special Congregation for the work she had in view, a project much approved by her Confessor. Great minds are, proverbially said, to think alike, and so it now again proved.

In 1652, M. Paul de Maisonneuve, the Governor of "New France," or Canada, returned home on business relating to the affairs of the vast transatlantic possession of the French Crown. Ever since 1534, when that bold navigator and explorer, Jacques Cartier, added this "new world" to the Bourbon Monarchy, the territory of "New France" had made much progress. The Governor, Samuel de Champlain, had founded the City of Quebec (1608), and now another civic centre—La Ville Marie (later to be Montreal)—had come into being through the enterprise of his successor, M. de Maisonneuve. This last Empire builder was anxious, among other things, to obtain school teachers for the ever increasing numbers of French Colonists. In some way he heard of Mademoiselle Bourgeoys, and her great success in identical work. An interview took place, and before many weeks were over another Pioneer of organized Catholic education in North America was on the high seas on the way to the sphere of her labours.

A voyage to North America, which is now accomplished by air in little more than a day, then took nine weeks. During that slow progress our spiritual heroine had more to do than to make plans for her life work. The plague, as it was called, broke out among the passengers, and with the zeal that ever urged her to do good, Margaret devoted all her energies to the temporal and ever spiritual welfare of the sick. Even after landing, she continued these ministrations for a time among the sick poor in and around Ville Marie, to the great benefit of those concerned.

In the matter of elementary education, her first beginnings were at a school erected for the children of the garrison. So successful did it prove, that others were formed on its model, and a number of "postulants" were organized on the lines of a Religious Congregation. The Catechetical part of the instruction seems to have been modelled on the "Sulpician Method," which about this time was introduced into "New France" by the Fathers of M. Olier's famous Congregation of Saint Sulpice. The expansion of the work threw immense and almost unprecedented labours on M. Bourgeoys. For she had not only to traverse many miles in her adopted country across regions infested by savage beasts and often more savage Iroquois Indians, but the difficulties of her mission also involved several sea journeys back to France to obtain more novices, and even to interest the mighty Louis XIV in the cause she had at heart. A royal decree gave her permission to teach anywhere in Canada.

One of these painful overseas expeditions was made necessary owing to the absence of the Bishop of Quebec in France. Margaret was convinced that the time had come for her Sisterhood and its Rule to obtain that formal approbation of the Ordinary required in such cases, but her troubles did not end with this matter. After her return, she had to resist various attempts made to merge her community with that of the Ursulines. The very nature of the work of the new Congregation with its simple vows, absence of veils, and "non enclosure," necessitated it being something quite apart.

In 1683 a special school for teaching Indian girls was opened at Mont Royal, a mission under The Fathers of St Sulpice. Just as Our Lady is piously believed to have assisted the Apostles after the Ascension of her divine Son, to make His Gospel known, so the Congregation de Notre Dame de Montreal aided the scattered missions of "New France" in all that related to the Christian instruction of the rising generation.

With the extraordinary development of her Foundation there came to its Foundress the conviction that her long and heavy task might with advantage be handed on to another and younger member, and so, in 1693, she resigned her Superiorship. The last seven years of her life were devoted to encouraging her Sisters in Religion in their holy vocation, and in committing to writing these sacred counsels and wise admonitions which have ever since

carried down so much of the spirit of the Foundress through each succeeding generation.

Mother Margaret Bourgeoys went to her eternal reward on 12th January, 1700. Not till 7th December, 1878, was she declared Venerable (Leo XIII). In 1910, Pius X issued a decree approving the heroicity of her Sanctity. Her Beatification by the present Pope (Pius XII) on 12th November, 1950, was the last of the kind during the Holy Year. The Ceremony took place at St Peter's in the presence of many French, American and Canadian pilgrims, headed by Cardinal McGuigan, Archbishop of Toronto, and a number of other Archbishops and Bishops.

In the two centuries and a half that have passed since the death of the object of all this homage, the growth of what she inaugurated can only be described as phenomenal. In 1700, the Congregation numbered about fifty-four Sisters. At the beginning of the present century this by no means large number had increased to 1479 professed Sisters, some 200 Novices, 36 Postulants, and 35,000 pupils! The handful of Convents in 1700 was represented by 131 Religious Houses, spread over twenty-one dioceses.

### BLESSED ANTHONY PUCCI

(1819-1892) Beatified June 22, 1952

WHEN Felix Antoine Dupanloup, the Bossuet of the Second Empire, was promoted to the See of Orleans (1849), he came to Ars to make his Consecration Retreat. He confided to the holy curé of the place, Jean Baptist Vianney, the fear he felt about accepting the episcopal burden. "There are many bishops in the Calendar of Saints, but very few Curés," replied the wonder worker of Ars, "so judge, monseigneur, whether you or I have the greater reason to fear!" The subject of this notice never ran any risk of the mitre, but his holy life has given yet another name to the comparatively short list of parish priests who have been raised to the Altars of the Church.

Eustace Anthony Pucci, so long the devoted pastor of the seaside town of Viareggio, was born at Poggiola, Tuscany, 16th April, 1819. His family belonged to that class of peasant landed proprietors that form the political backbone of most countries. His father occupied his time in managing a little farm, and in doing duty as Sacristan to the Parish Church. His son seems to have assisted much in the last-named service, for he served Mass daily, and doing various odd jobs for the priest, when attendance at the parochial school was not required. But it was not until he was seventeen years of age, that a definite vocation to religious life seems to have manifested itself. A pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady at Boccadereo decided the matter, and transformed the very pious young layman into an aspirant to the Order of the Servants of Mary generally known as the "Servites." He was



accepted, and on 23rd December, 1927, became a Novice at Florence under the name of Anthony Mary. In the course of the studies that formed part of the daily routine, Anthony Mary proved a diligent rather than a brilliant scholar. In the Latin classics, Virgil was his favourite author. The "Venusian Bard," who had inspired Dante, now had a share in shaping the studies of yet another son of holy Church.

About a year after his ordination, Fra Anthony was sent as assistant priest to St Andrew's Church, Viareggio, a parish served by the Servites. The place was industrially a centre of fisheries and general commerce, with a large congregation regarded as devout. But, like many other cities and towns of Italy at that time and long after, it had a sinister contrast in the form of much irreligion of an undisguised and, indeed, blatant character. Napoleon's "Kingdom of Italy" (1805-14) had inspired the Italian people with a deep sense of nationality as against the age-long division of the country among independent states. But the new patriotism unfortunately became infected with the principles that had marked the rise and growth of the French Revolution—religious unbelief and an intensely secular view of matters governmental. This subversive ideology, which spread over much of the continent, was responsible for almost two-thirds of the constant unrest that marked European history during the nineteenth century.

The Catholics of Viareggio had their full share of the ill effects of the hatred of religion which almost everywhere accompanied the rise of what was now termed "Liberalism." Gross abuse of the Faith and even personal violence became part of the new propaganda, and Fra Anthony himself was once so severely assaulted by anti-clerical partizans that he had to be carried back to the presbytery faint with the loss of blood. Yet he refused to prosecute his assailants, and despite his injuries went about his parochial work as if nothing had happened.

This unhappy state of affairs brought home to our long-suffering pastor the conviction that more much was required in the conduct of the modern parish than the old traditional quiet pious régime. What would now be called "Catholic Action" was set on foot. The Congregation of Christian Doctrine started solid instruction in the Catechism and the further course of Apologetics, which the spread of infidel opinions made imperative. The Society of St Aloysius for boys, and that of St Joseph for their elders, did much to guide the youth of the district during that admittedly difficult period of the life called "The Teenage."

Like his contemporary, the Curé of Ars, the "Curatino" of Viareggio, as Father Anthony was familiarly styled, spent many hours in the Confessional. Rising at 4 a.m., he often devoted much of the time before holy Mass at 6 a.m. "in the Box" continuing the laborious work of the Sacrament of

Penance at frequent intervals during the day. Having little ability for speaking extempore, his set sermons were usually read from a paper, but the excellence of the matter, its practical application and the earnestness of the preacher, more than made up for the absence of animated delivery.

In other matters, parochial, Father Pucci showed no less zeal. As guide, philosopher and friend he ever evinced a deep interest in the spiritual and temporal welfare of all. The sick, the aged and the poor were the special objects of his solicitude, and as the parish priest of a harbour town he made himself the true benefactor of seafaring men.

The fame of this model of parish priests soon spread far beyond the sphere of his daily labours, and in 1883 he was appointed Prior Provincial of the Servitors in Tuscany. He proved an excellent Prior, but no doubt the chief advantage of the high office in his opinion was, that it gave him the authority to continue as parish priest of Viareggio. He resigned his office of Provincial in 1889, and, being long impressed by the thought that it is not necessary to live a long life, he made the three years that remained to him both a preparation for his own death and a last course of spiritual labour for souls.

The last time that this model of parish priests apparently officiated in public, was on the feast of the Epiphany, 1892, when he sang high Mass in the parochial Church. A period of illness followed, but his mind was ever filled with thoughts for his dear parishioners, and those pastoral ministrations which for nearly half a century had consoled and sanctified so many souls, who had the privilege of his advice and care.

Fra Anthony, fortified by the last rites, yielded up his soul to God on 12th January, 1892. His death was the signal for a demonstration of sorrow and respect that can only be described as remarkable. Crowds of persons, high and low, came to venerate the sacred remains, and among the number were many who during his life had passed for enemies of everything sacred. A resolution of the Town Council described him as one who had displayed "a tireless apostolate of humanity and good works, and was ever an example of true virtue." His Cause was introduced at Rome in 1922, and Beatification by the present Pope Pius XII took place on 22nd June, 1952—a day always to be remembered for adding another holy patron of the very difficult labour connected with the guidance of almost every parish.

The story of the Blessed Anthony Pucci instructs us not only by the examples of his holiness, but even through the record of the natural obstacles he had to overcome. Of these, a constitutional timidity, the same that afflicted our poet Cowper, was perhaps the worst. It remained to him through life, but was largely overcome by prayer and a constant holy resolution which rarely fail to surmount whatever obstacles may come between the soul and God.

## BLESSED ROSA VENERINI, FOUNDESS OF THE CONGREGATION OF PIOUS SCHOOL MISTRESSES

(1656-1728) Beatified May 4, 1952

IGNORANCE of Religion is acknowledged to be one of the chief causes of continued indifference to it. St Paul seems to have had this fact in mind when he bade Timothy "to attend to reading" (I *Timothy* iv. 13). The matter became very imperative at the time of the Reformation when Catholicism was assailed in so many countries. A Society of priests and laymen under the presidency of Marco Casand was formed in Milan in 1571 to give organized religious instruction to children and the ignorant generally, and in 1596 Cardinal Bellarmine compiled a short Catechism for the same purpose. By that time associations for religious instruction had been established in many parishes of Italy and elsewhere, especially in Germany where St Peter, Canisius, S.J., the second Founder of the Church in that country, had published Catechisms small and great for the use of all.

Blessed Rosa Venerini stands forth high among that noble band of men and women who have "instructed many unto justice." Born at Viterbo, Italy, on 9th February, 1656, the daughter of a medical practitioner of the town, Dr Goffredo Venerini, and his wife, Mary Zampegetti, Rosa from her earliest years almost was a very devout child. A deep personal love of Our Lord and His Sacred Passion were a great part of her spiritual meditations, and on one occasion, when a very little girl, she said to her somewhat surprised mother: "Where does Jesus live as I want to go and see Him." A request no doubt answered, by the mention of the tabernacle and the sacred mystery it enshrines.

When seventeen years of age Rosa lost both parents, but being somewhat prematurely grown up she was quite capable of managing all the family affairs. But she was bent on something beyond that, *i.e.* to devote her life to the achieving of "a great work for God." Her Confessor at this time, Father Santo Celli, a Dominican, encouraged her to keep this holy ideal in mind and in her prayers. Another director, Father Ventura Bendinelli, gave similar advice. Later, Father Dominic Balestra, also a Dominican, suggested as a very practical good work the Catechetical instruction of children and ignorant persons generally.

Rosa entered whole-heartedly into the scheme, and so did a pious friend, Artemisid Burgeotti, who not only hired a house for the classes, but also paid the rent. Instruction gratis in reading, writing, cyphering and domestic work was likewise given. Of course the excellent venture had to face opposition from those who, never attempting anything worthy themselves, are ever the first to decry it in others! But the School flourished in spite of do-nothing critics, and before long Cardinal Marco Antonio

Barbarigo invited Rosa to open a school in his diocese of Montesiascone. The request was complied with, and the new foundation duly set on foot. While the arrangements for this were being made, Rosa stayed at a convent, where she met a kindred spirit who was destined to do much to consolidate the apostolic undertaking in question. This friend was a young lady, Lucia Fillapini, destined to be the second foundress, so to speak, of the Catechetical crusade. As at Viterbo, the new branch expanded and within two years other schools had been opened at Corneto, Valentano, Latira, Gradoli and elsewhere.

The fame of the new religious enterprise had now reached Rome, and an invitation came for a foundation of the congregation there. Cardinal Barbarigo, however, considered that the schools should become fully developed in Montesiascone as a diocesan institution before seeking fresh fields and pastures new. But his successor, Monsignor Pamphilio Bonaventura, was of a different way of thinking, and eventually in May, 1705, Lucia Fillapini, the faithful colleague of Rosa Venerini, went to the holy city and opened the first school of her congregation there, near the parish church of St Lawrence. A little later the reigning Pope, Clement XI, showed himself not merely a friend, but an enthusiastic admirer of a work that promised to effect so much good. Meanwhile, the absence of Sister Lucia had given rise to much difficulty at Montesiascone. The pupils deeply regretted her loss, discipline declined, and the number of scholars sank rather than increased. So the Bishop recalled the Sister, and in her place Rosa went to Rome for some months, long enough to assure the scholastic future of the recently opened school, and then she returned to the Mother House. At the request of the Jesuit Fathers she came back to Rome in 1713, and commenced a second school which was honoured by visit from the Holy Father, who on leaving said to the holy Foundress: "You are helping us to do our duty. You do what we cannot do. By these schools you will sanctify Rome. We thank you very much."

It was at Rome that Sister Rosa wrote the Rules of the Congregation. The manuscript is preserved at Viterbo, and the contents deal with the method of teaching, especially that of the Catechism, in addition of course to spiritual advice on matters of devotion and the daily life of the Sisters. The "habit" prescribed is black with a rosary suspended at the side.

For long the Congregation was regarded as a diocesan institution depending on the authority of the local Ordinary, and it was not until 1837 that formal papal confirmation was obtained (Gregory XVI). After the promulgation of the new code of Canon Law, a further Confirmation of the revised Rules was decreed by the present Pope Pius XII.

There are about eighty schools of the Congregation, for both boys and girls, in Italy and the United States. In addition to Christian doctrine, the

subjects of the curriculum include also the usual items of general education and a further course of varied technical instruction. When Sister Rosa began her life work she made over her share of the family property to her brother, and henceforth depended for the support of her schools on the alms of the faithful. She considered that institutions founded, as was hers, for the poor, should at least have this sign of poverty as an incentive to great and constant trust in the providence of God, as well as a means of bearing the Cross which draws down so many blessings on those who practise it. Meditation on the poverty and the Passion of Our Lord was her daily spiritual exercise, and this has continued to sanctify her daughters in Religion in the arduous labour that is the aim and object of their vocation.

The Foundress of the Schools for the poor went to her reward on 7th May, 1728. Her body reposes in the Church of the Jesu, Rome, but as in the case of many other holy persons, her Beatification was long delayed. That happy event took place on 4th May, 1952, during the present pontificate, which has seen so many stirring events, political and ecclesiastical, that have contributed to fashion the moral and material complex of the world.

The life story of the Blessed Rosa Venerini is a record not of wondrous happenings, too often regarded as inevitable in the careers of the Saints, but of that confidence in God joined to a firm resolution to do one thing really well for His glory, by His help, which is the key to all spiritual success whatever be the undertaking.

[*La Beata Rosa Venerini*, by Gella Vincenzo Cremigne, Bishop of Novaro. Rome 1952. Private information.]

## BLESSED PIUS X, POPE

(1835-1914) Reigned 1903-1914

POPE PIUS XI is said to have remarked once to Canon Cardijn, founder of the "Young Christian Workers," that the greatest social tragedy of later times was the estrangement of the working classes from the Church. Yet when those impressive words were uttered the process of restoration was already producing some reassuring results. Pope Leo XIII had given to the world that Magna Carta of Industrial Labour, the *Rerum Novarum*, many of the principles of which were being accepted everywhere as part and parcel of present-day economic routine.

His successor, the subject of this notice, to whom this and much else that stands for spiritual and temporal amelioration was due, was born on 2nd June, 1835, at Riese, a village in the territory of Venice. He was one of eight children of Giovanni Battista Sarto, who held the humble position of

postman under the local municipal council. His mother Margarita (*née* Sanson), a woman of remarkable piety, lived to see her son enrolled among the Sacred College. After leaving the village school, young Sarto studied Latin under the local Dean, Don Tito Fusaroni, and in 1850 was accepted as a church student for the Diocese of Treviso. His seminary course ended with his ordination to the priesthood at Padua, 18th September, 1858.

His first pastoral labours at Tombolo and Salzano were marked by great zeal for Catechetical instruction. Just as the Catechism of the Council of Trent can be said to have given an immediate impetus to popular religious instruction everywhere, so the Abbate Sarto by his treatment of the subject elevated what had hitherto been regarded as an elementary mode of imparting spiritual teaching into a system of solid doctrinal knowledge well suited to all, young and old.

The new departure brought the gifted and truly apostolic pastor into general notice. In 1875 he became a Canon of Terviso and Rector of the Seminary. He had for years been an assiduous student of St Thomas, and Canon Law, and in addition to directing the courses of the College, he established night schools in several centres for adult pupils. Though he had at least once declined episcopal preferment, he was in November, 1884, owing to the strongly expressed wish of Leo XIII, forced, much against his will, to accept the mitre of Mantua. This diocese was not a bed of roses! The city was beset with party factions. The Seminary was half empty and many of the parishes had no rectors! As in the case of St Charles Borromeo and Milan, Bishop Sarto began the great spiritual amelioration by a general visitation. The exhortations of a prelate already known for wonderful piety and zeal, and whose capability was so remarkable, soon brought about a great and happy change. The reform effected made a deep impression far beyond the Diocese, and in 1890 the apostolic Bishop was elected President of the first Italian Social Congress held at Placentia.

Three years later (September, 1893), the double honour of the Cardinalate and the Patriarchate of Venice was added to the Bishop of Mantua. At Venice much of the same initial trouble that had marked his accession to Mantua was in painful evidence. The City Council was somewhat anti-clerical, the Italian Government claimed the ancient privilege of the Doges to a "say" in the case of episcopal appointments, and all this resulted in a sort of deadlock. But the new episcopal ruler did not believe in quarrels! His great friendliness and tact soon disarmed all opposition, and peace reigned again over the Rialto, and the rest of the City of Canals and Lagoons.

At Venice the Cardinal Patriarch continued his work of raising ecclesiastical studies to a higher level and in encouraging the use of Gregorian Chant in the place of the operatic Church music which was a bad legacy coming down from the eighteenth century. He established rural banks for the

working class, developed the lace-making industry and provided for the erection of improved houses for persons of small means.

With the death of Leo XIII, in July, 1903, came the Conclave. On 4th August Cardinal Sarto obtained the requisite two-thirds of the votes and was elected Pope under the title of Pius X. The reign of the new Pontiff saw a great decline in the traditional pomps and splendours of the Vatican. A new régime of simplicity took its place, and, indeed, there was no time to spare for old-world ceremonial and all that it implied. Long impressed by the need of better religious tuition in view of the growing secularism of the age, the Holy Father by his Encyclical "*Acerbo Nimis*" (15th April, 1905) stressed again the vast importance of Catechetical and Apologetical instruction: the first for children, and the second for adults. Regional Seminaries superseded the old division of junior and senior Seminaries in many parts of Italy, and various regulations were issued for the spiritual and parochial life of the parish clergy. Realizing that Holy Communion is the best means of sanctifying the lives of everyone, the Holy Father, by decree (7th December, 1905), urged the faithful to become frequent and even daily communicants. Another decree, that of 7th December, 1906, permitted very young children to receive Holy Communion as soon as they were able to distinguish the Blessed Sacrament from natural food, and were sufficiently piously disposed.

The Codification of the Western Canon Law, which was begun in March, 1904, did much to reform ecclesiastical legislation and to adapt it more to the conditions of Modern Life. The Code did not come into force till 1918, when its conciseness and clarity excited the admiration of many non-Catholic legal personages, including President Wilson of the United States, and Mr, later Earl, Lloyd George, then the famous war-time Prime Minister of Great Britain and Ireland.

The Pope's interest in social affairs which had been such a prominent feature of his episcopal policy, went forward with ever-increasing zest during his pontificate. In the summer of 1905 a new association of ecclesiastics and layfolk arose in Italy for guidance in matters relating to political, economic and general social affairs—a union which did much to stabilize Catholic action, and remove those elements of discord which so often hamper and even defeat aims and ends however excellent.

It has been often remarked that a spirit of compromise joined to the national love of sport have been the chief safeguards of this country against the curse of Revolution. The "logical mind" of the Latin peoples and, until recently, the absence of strenuous games have, on the other hand, served as a veritable forcing bed for all kinds of unrest, public and private.

A good illustration of this is afforded by the almost continuous disorders on the continent of Europe during the past century. The great upheaval of 1789 which began with really very moderate aspirations—the equality of

all Frenchmen before the law in the matter of taxation and public careers—soon became the signal for a feverish agitation that has continued down to the present time. In such a welter of contention the Church was bound to be drawn. The bilateral Contract of Pius VII and Napoleon, signed, sealed and delivered in the famous Concordat of 1801, served long to preserve the *status quo*. But the policy of decatholicizing France began again in 1880, with the expulsion of the Religious Orders to the tune of Gambetta's slogan: "La Cléricisme voilà l'Ennemi!" A short truce owing to Leo XIII's attempt to "rally" French Catholics to the *de facto* government of the Republic, succumbed to the anti-religious Ministry of Waldeck Rousseau, and the situation greatly worsened under the violently anti-Catholic Combes régime of 1902-05.

Already the Government had suppressed the Religious Congregations and seized their property, but now another difficulty was added. The French Government claimed the sole right of appointing the bishops without any reference as to their fitness, and expected the Pope to accept this and grant the customary "Canonical Institution." The refusal of the Pope to agree to this almost unheard of demand, led to the breaking off of diplomatic relations between France and the Holy See (30th July, 1904), and on 1st December, 1905, the historic Concordat of Napoleon with Rome came to an end.

Conservative Europe certainly sided generally, in this matter, with the Apostolic See, which had done all that courtesy and reasonable compromise could do to effect an amicable solution. But though the greatest hardships and much personal suffering were entailed by the Act of revolutionary Godlessness, the Church of Charlemagne and St Louis did gain one boon by the disaster. Freed from the almost constant interference of those in authority, hostile to her, she has not only weathered the storm, but entered upon a new epoch of consolidation and wide progress. The changes brought about by the two world wars, and the gradual growth of those better feelings which catastrophic misfortunes so often cause in nations as well as in individuals, promise perhaps a happier future for religion in the land so long adorned by the title of "the Eldest Daughter of the Church." The proverb that "troubles seldom come singly," was certainly borne out during the reign of Pius X. The rupture of the Concordat was followed by another spiritual crisis which threatened an even greater danger. As the sixteenth century saw the rise of Protestantism with its diverse denials of the traditional Faith of Europe, and the succeeding century was confronted by the menace of Jansenism, so the first decade of this present epoch was marked by the beginnings of "Modernism." This subtle attack on the divine teaching of Our Lord is not easy to sum up in a concise statement, though in his Encyclical *Pascendi*, condemning the tenets of the new misbelief, the Pope



described it as the "Complexus of all heresies." For Modernists deny that Dogmas contain absolute truth. These are, so they say, mere symbols capable not only of evolution, but also of change, for they must be living, and life means change. The teaching office of the Church also is regarded as depending on the individual conscience of its members, since it can teach no more than what those members believe ! Such an assertion destroys at once the doctrine that Christ founded an authoritative, universal body empowered by Him to teach all nations—even to the end of the world—those doctrines which He himself had declared had come from His Father in Heaven (*St John* xv. 15). The effect of the Encyclical *Pascendi* was almost startling. Modernism within the Catholic Church certainly seemed to have received its death-blow, and as a name it is chiefly remembered now as an unchristian cult which had its brief day and then passed away.

In a mere biographical sketch such as the present it is impossible even to mention a tithe of the names of persons, incidents and events that filled the crowded reign of this remarkable Pontiff. Above all, his great personal holiness shone forth conspicuously. It was the source of his serenity and courage in the many griefs that fell to his lot, and also an encouragement to the numbers of persons Catholic and non-Catholic who came into contact with him. The Pope of the people seemed to radiate a trust in God all around him—a confidence that brought many to recognize that though the storms of life may rage, the "Cross stands while the world turns round," to cite the famous motto of the Carthusian Order.

One of the last and greatest sorrows of Pius X was, needless to add, the outbreak of World War I, which was to let loose the forces of destruction and establish an international confusion that is still unallayed. He offered his mediation to the belligerents—a mediation based on the age-long wisdom of the Church and her profound knowledge of mankind and all human conditions, but the appeal passed unheeded, and so Europe went on to tread the path of blood and tears ! The Holy Father died on 20th August, 1914, and, even amidst the turmoil of the stupendous conflict just beginning, his passing caused a pause as of recognition that a great and saintly pastor had left all of goodwill the better for his example and guidance. For, as "the sun when it shineth, so did he shine in the Temple of God" (*Ecclesiasticus* iv. 6) and the rays still cast their light on the morally dark places of the earth.

Devotion to this holy ruler of Catholicism, in days that called for the exercise of fortitude and wisdom of no ordinary kind, grew with the years, culminating in his Beatification by the present Pontiff Pius XII in the course of the Holy Year, 1950.

APPENDIX B

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BLESSED PHILIP HOWARD  
BLESSED RICHARD GWYN  
VENERABLE WILLIAM DAVIES  
BLESSED GASPARE DE BUFALO  
ST DOMINIC SAVIO

## THE BLESSED PHILIP HOWARD

(1557-1595)

Nothing in the circumstances of the early years of Philip Howard, Earl of Arundel, gave any indication that long before his death he was to prove himself to be one of the most steadfast of Confessors of the Faith. His grandfather, Thomas Howard, third Duke of Norfolk, had been one of the abettors of Henry VIII in his attacks on the Church, and his own father and the fourth Duke openly professed the Calvinistic tenets of Edward VI and Elizabeth. The subject of this notice went to Cambridge at a very early age, where a round of dissipation and not classical pursuits seems to have occupied most of his university terms. The position of his family rather than scholarly attainments obtained for him the Master of Arts degree, shortly after the great disaster that deprived him of his father had occurred. This was the execution of the Duke for alleged participation in the Ridolphi plot, some part of which was a scheme to deliver the unfortunate Queen of Scots from her prison at Fotheringay and to further her marriage with the Duke.

The assassination of Elizabeth, which was another and later object of the conspiracy, the Duke always utterly condemned, but the traditional Tudor vengeance went forward and the servile peers, obsequiously bowing to the well-established oriental despotism of the day, condemned him for treason, and the judicial murder on Tower Hill of course followed in 1572.

Though the ducal title and estates were forfeited by the attainder, some compensation was afforded the young heir through the hereditary honours of his mother. That lady, who died in giving him birth, was Mary, daughter of Henry, twelfth Earl of Arundel. So Philip Howard now came into that peerage, ever since one of the secondary titles of the Dukes of Norfolk.

Shortly after going to Cambridge, the Earl, though only fifteen years of age, had married a girl no older than himself. This was Anne Dacre, one of his father's wards. She proved a most excellent wife, and was instrumental in detaching her husband from the worthless course of life already referred to. Lady Arundel became a Catholic in 1582, and two years later, her husband followed her example. It is said that a controversy which took place between the famous Jesuit Father Campion and some Protestant divines was the cause which led to this. Campion's exposition of the inherent confusion of Protestantism arising from its principle of private interpretation of the Scriptures made a great impression on all present at the religious discussion, and no wonder. For the Catholic champion had the gift of convincing argumentation and Queen Elizabeth herself, so the report goes, had once gone in secret to hear him preach! The great Tudor

Queen, like her contemporary Catherine de Medici of France, was more sceptical than religious, but for all that, the conversion of Lord and Lady Arundel gave her great offence. To escape probable arrest Lord Arundel resolved to flee the country with his family, and he actually sailed from the Littlehampton port of Arundel for France. His vessel, however, was intercepted by a government ship and his arrest and imprisonment in the Tower followed. The usual trumped-up charge of "treason," based in this case on the pretence that the noble fugitive was seeking to go abroad to consort with the Queen's enemies, became the excuse for this outrageous violation of justice. An enormous fine of £10,000 and imprisonment during the royal pleasure raised what was a misfortune to a major disaster.

The sufferings of this victim of the tyranny, that had now become part of the normal condition of a once free England, were considerably more aggravated by the fact that the unhappy prisoner was entirely separated from his wife and the young son who had been born shortly after his arrest. In 1588 came the invasion of the Spanish Armada. None showed greater loyalty to the Queen and country than the oppressed body of Catholics. The Lord High Admiral who commanded the fleet against the invaders was Philip, Howard's own cousin, but all this did not save him from further persecution. He was accused of having prayed for the success of the enemy, a ridiculous charge, since his prayer had been for his own delivery from a most unjust imprisonment and not for the subjugation of his country. Though condemned to death by the Court of the Lord High Steward after the usual "legal mummery," as Macaulay describes the political trials of this odious period, the charge was too absurd even for the Tudor regime, and the capital sentence was not carried out.

Like the true hero he was, Lord Arundel rose superior to sufferings that would have completely overcome many a lesser soul. Despite the anguish caused by an uncertain fate, the misery of solitary imprisonment and the deprivation of the society of his dear wife and child, he found in devotion and study two great supports amidst the awful and ever present sorrows of his life. The compilation of a treatise on the "Excellence of Virtue" came from his pen, as well as a translation of "The Epistle of Jesus Christ to the Faithful Soul" by John Justus. Lord Arundel, one of the most eminent of the recusants who suffered under Elizabeth, ended his slow, bloodless martyrdom, still a prisoner in the Tower, on October 19th, 1595. He was buried in the Chapel of St. Peter Ad Vincula there, but in 1624 his remains were removed to Arundel. The "Cause" of his Canonization was duly introduced at Rome, and he was among those beatified by Pius XI in 1929.

Lives of the Earl and his wife, written probably by the latter's confessor, were edited by Henry Granville, fourteenth Duke of Norfolk in 1857. The

narratives are of great value, not only for the Catholic and general history of a period when the Reformation was producing its gloomy aftermath in this country, but also for the wonderful picture they give of an outstanding spiritual hero, who refused to be daunted by the almost unexampled evils of his time.

BLESSED RICHARD GWYN  
AND THE VENERABLE WILLIAM DAVIES  
(1593)

THE Reformation at the outset was even more unpopular in Wales than it had been generally in England. The revolt against the ancient Church was regarded as a foreign importation forced on the country for the basest purposes—the loot of ecclesiastical property and the enrichment of utterly unscrupulous partisans who, though notoriously quite irreligious, used religion as the cloak for their evil deeds. The Welsh Bards one and all denounced the “new religion” and its abettors, and a famous member of their order published a long satire on its chaotic teaching. This combined apologia and ode to the two Faiths did much to defend Catholicism, and the work evoked many other similar treatise in the generations yet to come.

But Catholic Wales from the first did more than protest vehemently against the heretical onslaught on the Faith. She gave not a few martyrs to the truths of the ancient Church of St Dubritius, and St Teilo. The first of these was Richard Gwyn, alias Wheth, the subject of this notice. He was a schoolmaster and was arrested at Wrexham, Denbighshire, on the charge of being “a Popish recusant.” After a year’s confinement at Ruthlin, he was taken to Bewdley and there tortured with a view to his betraying some persons suspected of being Catholics. He bravely endured the fearful ordeal, and kept his own counsel. Brought back to Wrexham for trial, he was there indicted and on October 13th was convicted of refusing to acknowledge the Queen’s supremacy in matters of religion. When leaving prison for death a few days later, Gwyn gave his blessing to a number of persons and in much the same spirit of St Thomas More said in reply to their verbal sympathy: “I do but pay my rent before the rent day.” On the scaffold, he asked the crowd to pray for him, and to bear witness that he died in defence of the Catholic religion. His last prayers were believed to have obtained the grace of conversion for a perjured witness, one Lewis Gronow, who had appeared against him at the trial. At the next Assizes, the unhappy man courageously made open confession to the Court “that, like Judas, he had given false witness.”

Richard Gwyn was beatified by Pius XI on December 15th, 1929.

It is said that some fifty natives of Wales are known to have lost their

lives in the cause of Catholicism during the long course of Tudor and subsequent persecutions. Among these was the Venerable William Davies, a missionary priest, and a member of an ancient family of Old Colwyn, Denbighshire. He was arrested at Holyhead and convicted at the Beaumaris Assizes in July 1593 together with some other recusants for denying the royal supremacy in matters of religion. He was hanged and quartered on the 27th but such was the indignation of the townsfolk that the gallows had to be erected within the prison for fear of a hostile demonstration against the sentence, and even an attempt at rescue, should the execution take place in public.

### THE BLESSED GASPARE de BUFALO

(1786-1837)

THE proverb that "good comes out of evil" seems to be well illustrated by what has occurred in not a few countries since the Reformation. The very presence of so many lost to the faith of their fathers has served as a great stimulus to those who have preserved the priceless heritage of Catholic belief. To practise it and so edify their separated brethren by worthy example has become an object in life.

In other nations that have clung to the faith of their fathers more or less, great saints have arisen from time to time to rouse their people from that spirit of religious indolence and even apathy that is worse perhaps than heresy itself.

St Philip Neri, champion against misbelief and unbelief under the very shadow of St Peter's, St Alphonsus Liguori weeping over the many clergy of his city, Naples, who did nothing while multitudes decayed spiritually before their eyes, show to what a state things may come when apostolic zeal and charity are in the depths of decline.

Gaspare de Bufalo, another and modern crusader in the cause of religion, especially for the man in the street, was the son of Antonio de Bufalo and Annunziata Quartieron, his wife. He was born in Rome near the Esquiline on January 6th, 1786. Delicate from his birth and even threatened with blindness, nothing seemed more unlikely than that he would become the founder of a great Congregation and inaugurate a revival of fervour in Rome itself! A novena of prayer to St Francis Xavier on his behalf was believed to have brought about a cure, and all through his life de Bufalo showed special devotion to the great Apostle of the Indies, and made his example a spur to his own efforts in much the same work.

When about twelve years of age, he became a pupil at the Roman College. By the time he had received the Subdiaconate, he was already recognized as a student with probably "a future." As in the case of St

John Baptist de la Salle—Founder of the Christian Brothers—who was made a Canon of the Diocese of Rheims, before commencing formal theological studies, de Bufalo, after receiving the first of the greater orders, was similarly honoured. Such a tribute was indeed a remarkable proof of the esteem in which he was held, but doubtless the honour gave the recipient as little satisfaction as it did later in the century to the St Curé d'Ars!

His ordination to the priesthood followed in July 1808, when his name was already a household one in Rome in connection with constant and most zealous labours among the poor.

Old and young were visited, the substance of the Catechism taught, and all instructed to practise their religion and to lead edifying lives at home and elsewhere. Thus, a great "leakage" under the very shadow of St Peter's itself was checked, and many small beneficed priests were aroused to follow his example and to prove that they had not been ordained to lead lives almost useless to themselves and to others!

To perpetuate these beneficent labours, the Abate de Bufalo established the School of Santa Maria del Pinto as a sort of training centre. The work at the outset was, however, much hindered by the French occupation of Rome in 1810, when Napoleon added the States of the Church to his "Pirate Empire," and caused the Holy Father to be carried away to a long captivity in France. Called upon to approve of this sacrilegious usurpation, de Bufalo, who never lost courage in the face of danger, flatly refused in the terse phrase: "I cannot, I ought not, I will not"—which became a sort of slogan in Italy. But the uncompromising declaration subjected the bold speaker to several years of exile, including some lengthy spells of imprisonment at Imola and Rocca.

With the fall of the Empire in 1814, de Bufalo returned to Rome to put into practice again the words of Our Lord: "The poor have the Gospel preached unto them." Thoughts of entering the Society of Jesus had long been in his mind, but acting on the advice of his Confessor, the Abate Albertini, he resolved to pursue what was obviously his true vocation, and provide for the permanency and extension of its object on a much greater scale. The outcome of this project was the formation of the "Missionaries of the Most Precious Blood." The sanction of Pius VII for the congregation was obtained through Cardinal Cristaldi, and a residence in Giano that had once belonged to the Convent of St-Felix was acquired as the Mother House.

The members of the new foundation took no further vows than that of "Charity," and before long the missions and retreats given by the Fathers had brought about much religious improvement among the indifferent, ignorant and often lawless sections of the population in central Italy. At the conclusion of a course of spiritual exercises, it was not uncommon to

see bands of brigands giving up their firearms and daggers as a proof that they had resolved to obey Our Lord's admonition to "Go and sin no more!"

As in the case of many other lovers of souls, de Bufalo had to bear that most difficult of burdens—the opposition of the good! Misled by misrepresentation and even slander, Pope Leo XII in consequence suspended for a time the apostolic work that was reforming so many of even his own unworthy subjects. The then recent death of the great Cardinal Consalvi (1824), who had won the admiration of Europe, Catholic and Protestant, by his resolute stand against the tyrannical policy of Napoleon, was an immense loss to the cause of even civil betterment. He had instituted some remarkable improvements in the government of the papal states, and was planning many more, when his decease stayed the good work and allowed much of what was bad in the old state of things to continue. When the Pope had heard from de Bufalo himself a detailed account of what he and his congregation were actually out to effect, and the almost miraculous improvement that had already resulted, the Holy Father saw how greatly he had been deceived, and later on described the zealous founder as "an Angel" in the cause of promoting the good of souls.

The heroic disregard of self which marked so much of de Bufalo's conduct in public affairs was no less conspicuous in private ones. Where the question of Eternity and Salvation was in point, no danger seemed to deter him. Hearing on one occasion that a notorious evil liver was dying, and that the unhappy man had threatened to kill any priest who ventured to approach him, this zealous missionary went straight to the bedside of the by now rapidly sinking patient, and by this very act of holy heroism literally reduced him to a sort of amazed stupefaction. Expert in dealing with such difficult cases, de Bufalo spoke in a way to produce recollections of home, happier days and better things, and with these came a change of mind and heart. The long rejected consolations of religion were gratefully accepted, and the triumph of grace over a nature deeply fallen was complete.

The remaining years of this Pauline apostle were spent in those works of faith and charity he had under God set himself to do, and with what success! In 1836, the cholera—which had scourged Europe for nearly ten years and claimed its victims by the tens of thousands, like another if lesser Black Death—appeared in considerable severity at Rome. To shrive the dying and bless the dead became Father de Bufalo's urgent endeavour and the last. After months of spiritual ministration and consolation to the many afflicted, he was himself stricken by the prevailing malady, and on December 28th, 1837, he passed through the portals of eternity fortified by the rites of holy Church whose solicitude for souls had ever been his guiding star on earth.

As in the case of many other holy persons, the process of canonization



of Gaspare de Bufalo was a very protracted one. He was beatified on August 8th, 1905, by Pius X, who had during many years of pastoral direction shown himself a model parish priest. The crowning honour of Canonization came on June 12th, 1954 (Pius XII), at a time distinguished by the elevation to the Altars of the Church of several other persons each of whom by a special kind of individual sanctity had left the world the better for outstanding lessons by precept and example.

## ST DOMINIC SAVIO

(1842-1857)

SAINTSHIP often seems to have a sort of terror even for not a few good people. The very mention of the word conjures up recollections of the austere lives and heroic mortifications often so vividly detailed in biographies of the sanctified, and the subject is at once put aside as beyond the possibilities of ordinary mortals!

No doubt it was to counteract this mistaken conception of exceptional holiness that the late Archbishop Goodier, S.J., published a leaflet, small indeed, but so excellent as to be regarded as almost unique of its kind. The opening lines set the reader thinking and he is soon informed as to what Holiness is, and what it is not. The instruction stresses the fact "that in order to be Saints, we have only to be what God made us to be. If we are clever, then to be clever; if we are successful, then to be successful; if not successful, then not to be successful," and so on with the other ups-and-downs of varying life and personality.

In the account of the brief career of Dominic Savio, the schoolboy Canonized Saint, we have all the sum and substance of the matter given in the last paragraph. He was sent into the world not to do anything wonderful or spectacular, but to use his one great gift, that of realizing the supreme meaning of Eternity, and in exemplifying its lesson by constant practice. Dominic Savio was born on April 2nd, 1842, at Riva, a country town in Piedmont. His parents, Charles and Brigid Savio, belonged to that simple and upright peasant stock from which so many notable persons, religious and secular, have come. Blacksmith's work and labours in the field kept the head of the family busy, but he had higher ambitions for his son. When five years old, Dominic went to the parish school at Murialdo, where he made such good progress that at the age of ten he was recommended by the head teacher, the Abate Zucca, to the Grammar School at Castelnuovo, as a very promising pupil. He was accepted, but the change involved some nine miles there and back on foot daily. In 1852 the Savios went to live at Mondovo, and it was about this time that Dominic felt the urge of a vocation to the priesthood. He began the study of Latin at the school,

and in 1854 the Principal brought this probable candidate for ordination to the notice of the famous social reformer, educationalist and spiritual adviser, Don John Bosco, canonized on Easter Sunday 1935.

Struck by the misery, destitution and vice of so many young people in urban centres at the time, the Don began his rescue work, about 1845, by a sort of club for poor boys in Turin. Before long, and in face of many difficulties, this humble beginning had developed into a number of substantial buildings representing schools, workshops and social centres in Turin and elsewhere. Public interest was aroused in a movement that was so powerfully aiding the "Submerged Tenth" in the struggle to save itself.

To make his institute, or "Oratory" as it came to be called, permanent, Don Bosco set about forming a religious Congregation with approved rules for those who were his assistants, or who should hereafter aspire to devote their lives to this noble work.

To this "Salesian" Society named in honour of St Francis of Sales, the promoter of so much spiritual fervour, Dominic Savio now came as a Postulant. From the commencement of his sentient life, he had been a most devout child and when about nine years of age, he drew up a "Rule of Life" for guidance in the practice of his religious duties, and as a reminder that one should prefer to die rather than commit a mortal sin—a counsel given by Queen Blanche of France to her son, the future Saint and King Louis IX (1226–1270).

St Francis of Sales always maintained that the humble and constant fulfilment of duty was the true proof of sanctity. Dominic ever had this in mind for as he said: "I am not capable of doing big things, but I want to do even the smallest things for the greater glory of God."

Don Bosco further urged the frequent use of the Sacraments of penance and Holy Communion and to this, Dominic added, as a personal act of piety, the practice of making a special intention for some particular object every time he received the Blessed Sacrament. A remarkable devotion to the Passion of Our Lord and to His Holy Mother were other aspects of his spiritual life. With the approval of the school authorities he founded, in 1856, a Sodality to promote increased honour to the Immaculate Conception, defined as an article of Faith by Pius IX two years before.

With regard to his schoolfellows, his influence for good was no less remarkable. This came to be regarded as a beneficial power in itself, and one that did much to preserve a right spirit. He not infrequently composed differences and even more serious troubles among his companions, and he was always ready to help the backward section in the matter of studies and exercises. When Dominic came to the school in 1854, his frail appearance was the subject of some comment, and this condition seems

to have increased owing to his close application to class work and the general routine of the place. A medical friend of Don Bosco, a Dr. Vallauri, was called in to examine him. The doctor reported that Dominic's strength was giving way and that a change of life would be desirable. So, to his sorrow, he left the oratory for a long holiday, and went home to his parents at Mondovo.

But this change was only another case of Horace's "*Coelum non animum.*" The now seriously ailing boy had no delusions on the subject, and prayers for a happy death formed a large part of his daily devotions. He became worse and a local practitioner, Dr. Cafasso, ordered him to bed, as inflammation of the lungs had set in. The Viaticum and Extreme Unction were administered and the Last Blessing given; and on March 9th Dominic asked his father to read the prayers for the dying from the "*Companion of Youth*," a book compiled by Don Bosco. Before the reading was ended the dying boy exclaimed in a sort of ecstasy: "Oh what wonderful things I see," and with these words on his lips this example of youthful sanctity yielded up his soul to God. Some time before as the Rules of the Salesian Congregation were being completed, Don Bosco was preparing to go to Rome with a view to their official approval. Knowing this, Dominic had asked him as a special favour to request the Holy Father "not to lessen his special care for England, as God is preparing a great triumph for the Catholic Church in that country." Asked what was the cause of this supposition, Dominic said that one day after Holy Communion he had seen, as in cloud, a multitude groping about like travellers who had lost their way. At the same time, a voice seemed to say, "This country is England." A figure of the Pope holding a torch was also part of the scene, which the voice declared to be the preaching of the Catholic Faith that was to illumine England. This incident recalls a similar one in the life of St Paul of the Cross, showing him in vision some of his brethren labouring for the conversion of England.

Though a "*Life*" of Dominic Savio by Don Bosco, which appeared in 1859, made the wonderful story of this holy schoolboy more widely known, it was not until 1908 that the "*Cause*" of his Canonization commenced.

Declared Venerable by Pius XI in July 1933, and Blessed by Pius XII on March 5th, 1950, his name was finally enrolled among the Saints by the same Pope on June 13th, 1954. The several miracles proved in the process of the inquiry further attest the heroicity of a sanctity which will enshrine his name for ever among the holy patrons of youth, whose example is destined to inspire and encourage each succeeding generation of students to love God and to consecrate in a general way their daily lives to His Service.

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